MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

JUNE 2002 #229 $3

INDSIDE: EPILEPTIC TERROR ATTACK • HOLIER THAN THOU? • COUNTDOWN TO PUTSCH • THE SOUND OF FAILURE • DAVE HILL DISTRIBUTION • THE NUBS • NEW DISORDER RECORDS •LES BATON ROUGE

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL TOP 10

For what it's worth (not much), here's some of the MRR crew's current Top 10 (or so...) lists of stuff we review.

ROB COONS

VITAMIN X-Down the Brain-LP	V/A-No Core-LP
9 SHOCKS TERROR-live	VIRGINIA BLACK LUNG-Gentrifuckers-EP
TOTALITÄR-Allting Är På Låtsas-EP	DUDMAN-Fu Hatsu Dawn Otoko-EP
V/A-Reality Part 4-LP	PHANTOM LIMBS/FLESHIES-live
BENUMB/PIG DESTROYER-split CD	9 SHOCKS TERROR/EPOXIES-live

ARWEN CURRY

DUDMAN-EP/TOTALITÄR-Allting Är-EP	MRR Anniversary Wheatpasting Symposium
CAUSTIC CHRIST-EP/SMALLTOWN-EP	BEHIND ENEMY LINES-Know Your Enemy-LP
CONSTRICTED-EP/QUEERWÜLF-EP	SELFISH-Burning Sensation-LP/TYRADES-EP
FORCED VENGEANCE-EP/MEA CULPA-EP	PHANTOM LIMBS/EPOXIES-live
VÅNING 5-EP/DUESENJAEGER-EP	GRABASS CHARLESTONS /BILLY REESE PETERS-LP

JONATHAN FLOYD

FACE DOWN DRUNK IN CHICAGO

JEFF HEERMANN

LO-LITE-Sidekicks-LP	SUPERHELICOPTER LTD.-My Soul-EP
V/A-California Ain't Fun No More-CD	VILENTLY ILL-LP
LEG HOUNDS-Mono & Stereo-CD	KO & THE KNOCKOUTS-LP
MODEY LEMON-CD	RIFFS-Dead End Dream-LP
SOLEDAD BROTHERS-Steal Your Soul-LP	TYRADES-I Got It All-EP

TOM HOPKINS

CONSTRICTED-Struggle-EP	TOTALITÄR-Allting Ar Pa Latsaas-EP
BEHIND ENEMY LINES-Know Your Enemy-LP	RIFFS-Dead End Dream-LP/STOMPEDE-EP
DEAD ONES-EP/CRISPY NUTS-LP	SELFISH-Burning Sensation-LP
LET IT BURN/SCARLETT LETTER-split EP	APATIA NO/RUSH-split EP/SMALLTOWN-EP
V/A-Anarchy in the PRC-EP	NINE SHOCKS TERROR-LP & live

CAROLYN KEDDY

SUPERHELICOPTER LTD.-My Soul-EP	KO & KNOCKOUTS-LP/V/A-Red Snerts-LP
BRAINFAILURE/ANARCHY JERKS-split EP	JEWWS-EP/*No Such Thing*-film
DAMNATION KIDS-Fucker-45	MR. CALIFORNIA/14 YR. OLD GIRLS-split EP
SOLEDAD BROTHERS-Steal Your Soul-LP	LO-BUDGETS-Oh Yeah-EP
TYRADES-I Got a Lot-EP	OKMONICS/TRAMPS/MR. CALIFORNIA-live

DULCINEA LOUDMOUTH

LO-LITE-Sidekicks-LP	HOT POCKETS-Kiss 'n' Run-LP
TYRADES-I Got a Lot-EP	DAMNATION KIDS-Fucker-45
MOORAT FINGERS-Achtung Duschbag-EP	SUPERHELICOPTER LTD.-My Soul-EP
LOW BUDGETS-Oh Yeah-EP	JEWWS-I Need Your Lovin'-EP
KO & KNOCKOUTS-LP	ATOMSMASHERS-Alright-45

RAY LUJAN

PLUS ONES-It's A Calling-CD	WHORE DADDY-O'S-Kill Your Stepdad-45
CRISPY NUTS-LP	SONS OF CYRUS-A Lonesome Boy-45
RIFFS-Dead End Dream-LP	DISCOUNT-Singles #1-CD
KO & THE KNOCKOUTS-LP	SMALLTOWN-Fall Into Line-EP
GREEN MONSTERS-Aiming Low-EP	HEARTATTACK-CD/TYRADES-I Got A Lot-EP

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- US: $3 each. 6 issue sub for $18. If you're in California, send $19.49 (tax).
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- Everywhere else: $8 each (air) or $5.50 (surface). 6 issue sub for $48 (air) or $33 (surface).

Let us know which issue to start with!

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE: Back issues #148, 150-154, 156-159, 161-163, 166-181, 184-227 are as stated above in subscription info. See page after next.

DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE:
Scene Reports: continuously, with photos!
Interviews: continuously, with photos!
Ad Reservations: call to make sure.
Ad Copy In (with payment): by 15th of previous month–NO LATER!!!
Issue out: by 2nd week of following month.

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1/6 page: (2 3/8" x 5") $25
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AD CRITERIA: We will not accept major label or related ads, or ads for comps that include major label bands. We reserve the right to refuse ads for any reason at any time. Send ads properly sized on paper.

CLASSIFIEDS: NEW PRICE! $2 for a maximum of 40 words. No racist, sexist or fascist material. Send typed if possible. Cash only!!! Expect a two month backlog!

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Please send all records, zines, letters, articles, scene reports, photos, subscriptions, interviews, ads, etc., to:

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SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94146-0760
Phone (415) 923-9814
maximumrnr@mindspring.com
(use this mainly for comments & letters. Use phone for ads & other business stuff)

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL TOP 10

Please send us records (2 copies of vinyl, if possible–one for MRR and one for reviewer), or CD-only release. See records section for where to send tapes.

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

TOTALITÄR-Allting Är På Låtsas-EP
ZOUNDS-This Land-45/CAUSTIC CHRIST-EP
DUESENJAEGER-EP/SUICIDE FILE-EP
DEAD ONES-Busted Heads-EP
APATIA NO/RASH-split EP
FUDGE/TOTSUGEKI SENSYA-split EP
QUEERWÜLF-Cockroach City-EP
SMALLTOWN-Fall Into Line-EP
V/A-No Core-LP
GRABASS CHARLESTONS /BILLY REESE PETERS-LP

WILLIE NELSON

COLD SWEAT/HOMO ERADICUS-live
SELFISH-Burning Sensation-LP
CAUSTIC CHRIST-EP/I.A.F./HOW-split EP
CONSTRICTED-Struggle-EP/COJOBA-EP
FORCED VENGEANCE-Stay-EP
VÅNING 5-Vårldens Största Demikrati-EP
DUDMAN-Fu Hatsu Damn Otoko-EP
BLASTONECROSIS-Blood of Our Foes-EP
TOTALITÄR-Allting Är På Låtsas-EP
BEHIND ENEMY LINES-Know Your Enemy-LP

DONNA POOLE

CIVIC MINDED 5-E=CM5-LP
DEAD ONES-Busted Heads-EP
KILL THE HIPPIES-Exterminate-EP
LO-BUDGETS-Oh Yeah-EP
MOORAT FINGERS-Achtung Duschbag-EP
QUEERWÜLF-Cockroach City-EP
SMALLTOWN-Fall Into Line-EP
SUICIDE FILE-The Purple Dawn-EP
TEENAGE REJECTS-Teenage Trash Vol.2-EP
TOTALITÄR-Allting Är På Låtsas-EP

BRUCE ROEHRS

BALZAC-Atom Age Vampires-2xLP
V/A-Brewed in Sweden-2xLP
TOTALITÄR-Allting Är På Låtsas-EP
KERMITS FINGER-Jacques Jon Benet-10"
DISTURBANCE-Live on to Decline-EP
RIFFS-Dead End Dream-LP/SKINT-CD
STOMPEDE-Jo Anny Ta-EP/TANKA RAY-CD
OVERSPILL-Who's War-EP
LUTECE BORGIA-Dans La Boue-EP
V/A-No Core: 1982 Hardcore-LP

MIKE THORN

VÅNING 5-Vårldens Största Demikrati-EP
BEHIND ENEMY LINES-Know Your Enemy-LP
FORCED VENGEANCE-Stay-EP
QUEERWÜLF-Cockroach City-EP
TOTALITÄR-EP/CAUSTIC CHRIST-EP
BREAD & WATER/SKARP-live
SELFISH-Burning Sensation-LP
APATIA NO/RASH-split EP/SMALLTOWN-EP
VIRGINIA BLACK LUNG-Gentrifuckers-EP
All Bands That Played MRR Anniversary Bash

RYAN WELLS

KILL THE HIPPIES-Exterminate-EP
VILENTLY ILL-LP
SUPERHELICOPTER LTD.-My Soul-EP
TEENAGE REJECTS-Teenage Trash Vol.2-EP
TYRADES-I Got a Lot-EP
JOHN WILKES BOOZE-Whiskey & Booze-EP
DECAY-Dead Brain-EP
MOORAT FINGERS-Achtung Duschbag-EP
MR. CALIFORNIA/14 YR. OLD GIRLS-split EP
V/A-Red Snerts-LP

KENNY KAOS/REMA YOUNG

MOORAT FINGERS-Achtung Duschbag-EP
ATOMSMASHERS-Alright-45
HOT POCKETS-Kiss 'n' Run-LP
LEG HOUNDS-XOXO-EP
CRISPY NUTS-I Heart Crispy Nuts-LP
TEENAGE REJECTS-Teenage Trash Vol.2-EP
TYRADES-I Got a Lot-EP
JEWWS-I Need Your Lovin'-EP
RIFFS-Dead End Dream-LP
SKELETT-Shut Your Piehole-LP

ZINE TOP TEN

Confessions of a Former High School Cheerleader #1
Crude Noise #2
No Pasaran #7
Busca y Destruye #2
Drop Out #5
Rad Party #28
Razorcake #17
Spare Change #13
Trash Faction #3
Zine World: A Reader's Guide #17

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#148/Sept '95. Soda Jerks, Toe Rag, Thorazine, Sacred Straight, Wizo, Opposition Party, Moody Jackson, Adversives, Opcion Crucial, Rebel, Rebel, Teen Idols, Walking Ruins.

#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#151/Dec '95. Lowdowns, My White Bread Mom, Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/Humanity, Stains, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue.

#152/Jan '96. Delilah Jacks, Battalion of Saints, Bottom Feeders, Turbonegro, Murder Junkies, Junior, Assfort, Retch Records, Com-Fract, Dead End Kids.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#154/Mar '96. Motards, Subincision, Stisism, Donnas, Stallions, Count Backwards.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#157/June '96. Against All Authority, The Criminals, Wardance, Heroines, Brain Brats, Rudiments, Chinese Millionaires, Sons Of Hercules, Your Mother, Yellow Scab.

#158/July '96. Workin' Stiffs, The Gain, Ashley Von Hurter, Haters, The Process, Brother Inferior, Judge Nothing, Break-ups, Not For Rent.

#159/Aug '96. Smugglers, Brand New Unit, Tone Deaf Pig-Dogs, Round Ear Spocks, David Hayes/Very Small Recs, Man Afraid, Blind Side, Vox Populi, Death Wish Kids, Fun People, Fat Drunk & Stupid.

#160/Sept '96. Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, Mormons, John Q. Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Business, Apocalypse Babys, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Phantom Surfers, Candy Snatchers, the Stain, National Guard, Torches To Rome, Restos Fosiles, Two Bo's Maniacs, Snuka, Redemtion 87, Torture Kitty.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#167/Apr '97. Grand Theft Audio, No Fraud, Gauze, Nobodys, Sloppy Seconds, Danko Jones, Viceroys, Forgotten.

#168/May '97. Cretin 66, Fishsticks, UK Subs, Distemper, Enewetak, Fields Of Shit.

#169/June '97. Hand Skin, Cluster Bomb Unit, Jihad, Purgen, Speed Queens, Remission, Halflings, The Old Man, Deface.

#170/July '97. Bristle, Mine, Tedio Boys, The 4 Cockroaches, Absconded, Meanwhile, Broken, (Young) Pioneers, Hoodrat.

#171/Aug '97. Strychnine, Idiots, Pelado Recs, Misanthropists, Racetraitor, Violent Society, Knuckleheads.

#172/Sept '97. Withdrawals, Judgement, No Motiv, Oppressed Logic, Truents, Left For Dead, Yellowskin, Weird Lovemakers, Smash Your Face, Flatus, Straight Faced, Klaxon, X-It.

#173/Oct '97. Hot Water Music, Fat Day, Los Tigres Guapos, Les Partisans, Bristols, My 3 Scum, Space Shits, Pessimiser Recs, Reclusives, Nick Qwik.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity, Education theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#176/Jan '97. Scared of Chaka, Voorhees, Stalingrad, Upstairs People, Squid Boy, Izgoy, Beltones, Sky Grain, 1,4,5s, Ducky Boys, JCCCamp.

#177/Feb '98. Superfly TNTs, Submachine, Dropout, Society Gone Madd, Pinhead Circus, Ann Beretta, Blackbird, Naive, Useless ID, Quarantine.

#178/Mar '98. Economics issue. Forgotten Rebels, Dirtys, Josh Collins, American Steel, Letterbombs, Gyogun Rend's, Go-Devils, Room 41, Tone Deaf Pig Dogs, Garage Rats

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, Stiletto Boys, All Bets Off, Bonecrusher, Summerjack, Cell Blck 5, DDI, Normals, Pirate Radio issue.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Umlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, Third Party, No Class, Skabs.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres..

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#211/Dec '00. Fly & Seth Tobocman, Anti/Dogmatikss, Hissyfits, Aus Rotten, Media Blitz, Rocks, Hospital Food, Falsies, White Stripes, 9 Shocks Terror, Tijuana Bibles.

#212/Jan '00. Avail, Born Dead Icons, From Ashes Rise, the Voids, the Guilty Pleasures, xLimpwristx, Chachi on Acid.

#213/Feb '01. Fun People, Onward to Mayhem, Ugly Pop, Midnight Evils, Atrocious Madness, Bread & Water, Josh Peach, Zodiac Killers.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y. Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagandhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#219/Aug '01. "Fix It!" cycling article, Crucial Unit, Lost Sounds, Lombardies, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 1, Casualties, Resinators, *P.U.N.K.*, Slaughter & the Dogs, Anti-Flag, Dontcares, S'Bitch.

#220/Sep '01. Latin American Issue. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum, Kim Bae Photo Essay.

#221/Oct '01. Tales from the G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#226/Mar '02. Queer punk special issue. Vaseline, Quails, Skinjobs, Italian queer punk report, Vaginal Davis, Feelings on a Grid, Sissies, Scott Free, Dumba, Columns.

#227/Apr '02. BACK IN PRINT!! Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#228/May '02. SOLD OUT!!!

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¡ACHTUNG!

INTERNATIONAL MRR READERS

¿THE POST OFFICE HAS DONE IT AGAIN?

YEP THAT'S RIGHT, THE PRICE OF INTERNATIONAL POSTAGE HAS NEARLY DOUBLED. PLEASE SPECIFY AIR OR SURFACE WHEN ORDERING!

Sorry this is so expensive, we're not happy about it either (however, zines shipped by surface should still arrive before it hits newstands). You can also save money by selling MRR at shows, bulk rate boxes of 20 are available. We are investigating cheaper methods of shipping so stay tuned!

NEW MAILORDER RATES

Location	one magazine (u.s. dollars) Air (3-5 days)/Surface (4-6 wks)	two zines Air	three zines Air	four zines Air	five zines Air	subscription rates (six months) Air (3-5 days)/Surface (4-6 wks)
Canada	4.00/3.00	8.00	12.00	14.00	15.00	24.00/18.00
Mexico	4.50/5.00	8.00	12.00	14.00	15.00	27.00/30.00
Western Europe	8.00/4.00	12.00	13.00	14.00	15.00	48.00/24.00
Japan Australia N. Zealand	9.00/4.50	12.00	13.00	14.00	15.00	54.00/27.00
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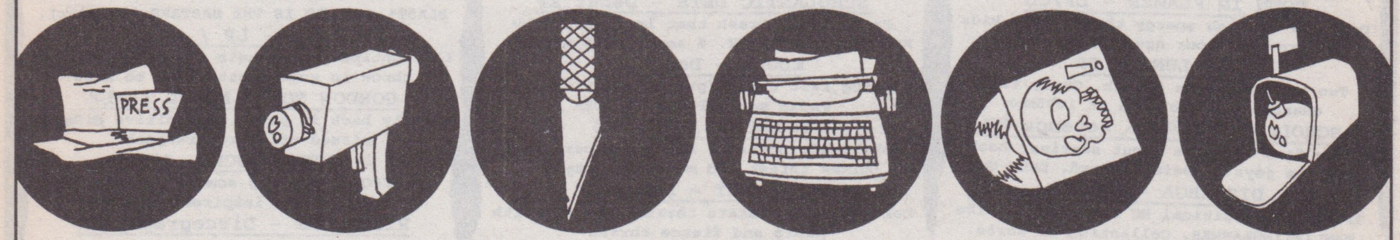

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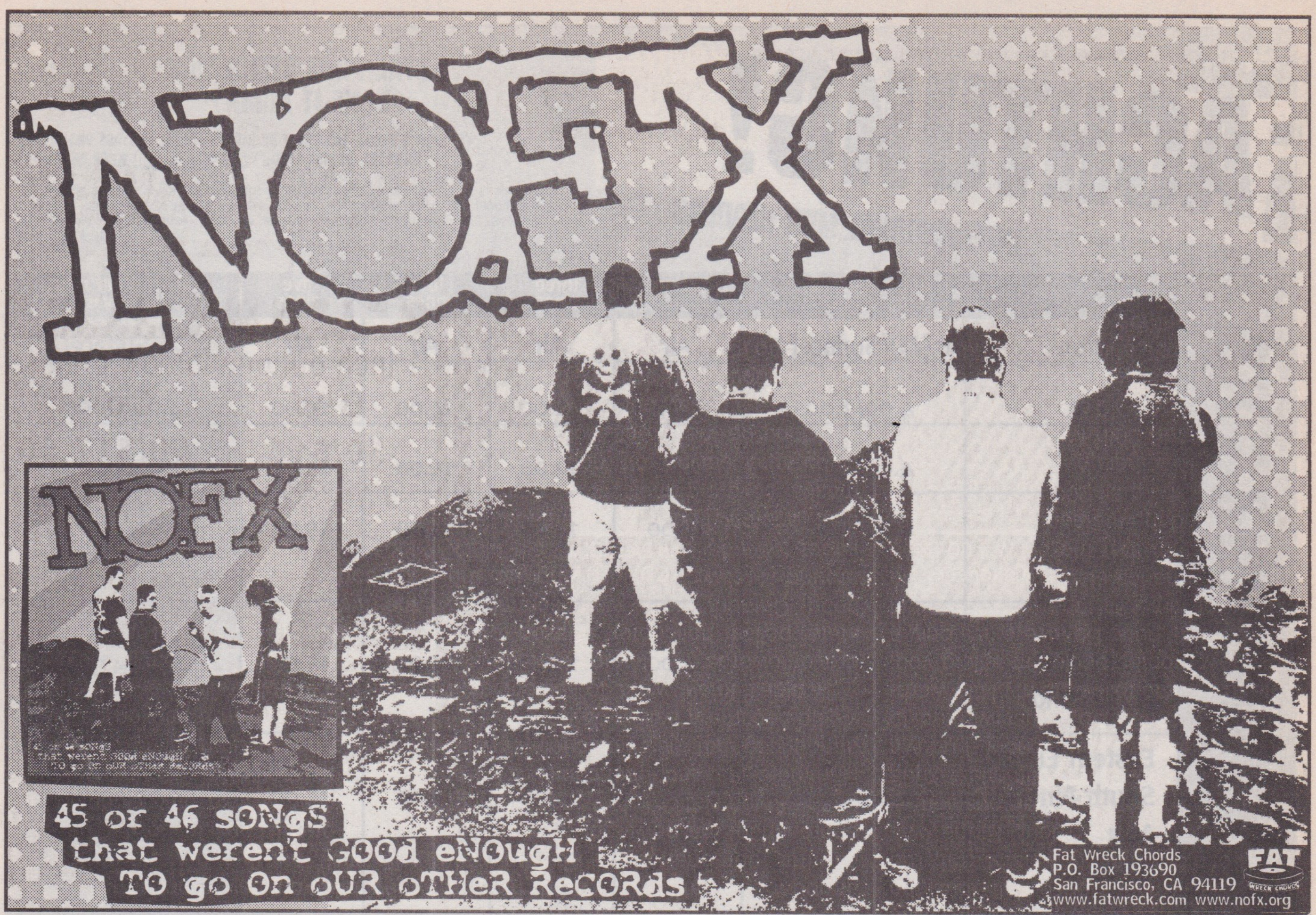

OUT DEC/JAN/FEB

HHH - 2xCD Discography (repress)
The complete collection of this Spanish thrashcore band. One of my favorites.

CRUCIAL ATTACK - Debut EP
Raw as fuck SXE HC from Reno. No polish here....pissed off and punk.

BG - Debut EP
500 press run of ex-BURNED UP BLED DRY guys playing grinding German style HC.

ExTxA - We're not the...CD
Collection of the first LP, debut EP and comp tracks/unreleased. Fierce Swedish HC.

BREAKFAST - Eat Rice EP
The 2nd EP by Tokyo skate-thrash kings. Recorded like new EXCLAIM stuff...ripping.

DOWN IN FLAMES - LP/CD
Debut LP of high energy thrash from kids who are half your age. CD has extra.

IRON LUNG - EP
Two man grindcore attack. Crazy time changes & off chords at 1000mph

SCHOLASTIC DETH - Revenge EP
7 new fast HC songs about skating, books and the joys of being a nerd. Lets GO!

DISCARGA - LP/CD
Ultra fast political HC from Brazil...like MANLIFTINGBANNER. Collection of sorts.

V/A - Barbaric Thrash Vol III CD+EP
Shitloads of new thrash bands from all over the world plus a crazed ASOCIAL demo EP.

LIE - Why EP
LIE return to their no-BS fast thrash roots. 4 new ones for the west coast tour.

REAGAN SS - EP
Pissed LA hardcore....flex your fucking head!

QUATTRO STAGIONE - Debut EP
Crazed German grindcore....like HE WHO CORRUPTS. Drummer is smoking mad crack.

YOUTH ENRAGE - MCD
Crazed fast core from Sapporo! Third outing..includes CD-Rom video of 2 shows.

Ebullition distro's 625 shirts as well. Check either website

6X2X5 thrashcore

EPS STILL AVAILABLE:

THE REAL ENEMY - EP
Positive, political and fast youth crew from Minneapolis. Their last record

FACE OF CHANGE-1990 Demo 2xEP
Combo of raw HC and melody not unlike early 7 SECONDS and UNIFORM CHOICE. 90 demo.

JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS - Debut EP
1000 more of this now legendary band. Osaka's version of early GANG GREEN.

SCHOLASTIC DETH - Debut EP
Fast skate-thrash that is inspired by HERESY and HENSLEY. 6 songs in 6 minutes.

EDORA - Debut EP
Ripping fast thrash/grind from Singapore. FxOxB meets POWER OF IDEA

POINT OF FEW - EP
Political, powerful Dutch hardcore that mixes thrash and modern HC styles

BREAKFAST - Debut EP
Debut of Tokyo skate thrash. Mix SST with manic and fierce thrash!

JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS/EXCLAIM split EP
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LPS/CDS STILL AVAILABLE:

RAMBO - Wall of Death LP/CD
Mix FINAL EXIT (Swe) and PROJECT X, throw in some fatigues and a huge mosh pit and you have fucking RAMBO. Cd-rom video too!

IMMORTAL FATE - Beautiful LP
Brutal, guttural grindcore not unlike the first INCANTATION LP. Pre-NO LESS members.

REAL REGGAE - MAZE + THC CD
Guitar heavy thrashcore from Osaka Japan. Compiles Eps, comps and the Maze CD on MCR!

V/A - Murderous Grind Attack CD
An American/Japanese 17 band CD comp of brutal, DIY grindcore. Not for math-metal wimps, this is as raw as it gets.

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS - LP
Insane hardcore that is like a mix between BLAST! and MAN IS THE BASTARD (I swear).

LIE - LP / CD
LIE continue with their fierce thrash and throw in some snotty punk to boot

GORDON SOLIE MOFOs 10"LP
Finally back in print, definitive Midwest pissed-off hardcore/punk.

DUMBSTRUCK - LP
Ex-RIPCORD playing some rough and raw Scandanavian inspired hardcore

HIGHSCORE - Discography CD
Super fast youth crew from Germany. Contains the LP, EP, comp tracks and demo

PLUTOCRACY - Dankstahz CD
Collection spanning 89-93. Out of control grindcore, splits, LP, live, etc.

LIFES HALT/WxHxN - Split LP/CD
Been in the works for years, finally happening in support of the US Summer Tour!

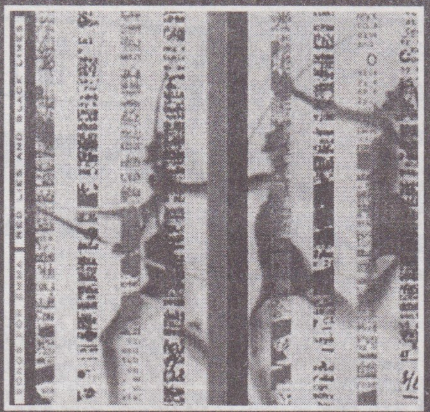
WxHxN - The Second Year CD
The 6", Japan Tour Ep, and the 'Ahora Mas Que Nunca' EP, plus some other surprises!

SPAZZ - Sweatin II CD
The first LP, split CD w/SUBVERSION and live radio show. Full 60 minutes.

AVULSION - CD
Super crazed grindcore from Buffalo

Call the Slambulance, I"m going to the Moshpital !

HEART ATTACK - The Last War 80-84
26 song CD from NYCHC Pioneers



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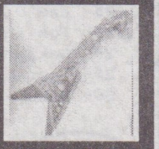

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PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS "Fuck with Fire" LP/CD
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2464...**AFI**-A Fire Inside 7" EP...$4.00
6688...**OPERATION: CLIFF CLAVIN**-When Everythings Been Said Double CD...$9.50
2365CD...**REDS**-It's About Time CD...$11.00/ LP....$9.50(cat#2280LP)
2916...**BREAD AND WATER/REASON OF INSANITY**-Split 7" EP...$4.50
6892...**ANTISCHISM**-Still Life CD...$10.50
2286...**DEFIANCE**-No Time 7"EP...$5.00
6644...**AUS ROTTEN**-...And Now Back To Our Programming CD...$12.50
6463...**OI POLLOI**-Fight Back CD...$16.00
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4348...**LOCUST/MAN IS THE BASTARD**-Split 10"...$8.50
2965...**WHITE STRIPES**-Hello Operator b/w Jolene 7"...$4.00
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2258LP...**BUTTHOLE SURFERS**-Brown Reason To Live LP...$7.00
1357LP...**ZOUNDS**-Curse Of Zounds & Singles 2XLP...$14.00
2127CD...**SAMIAM**-Billy CD...$11.00
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THE STITCHES

LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to maximumrnr@mindspring.com. response guaranteed.

Hi Arwen,

Assert's drummer, Chris "Cross" Burleigh died yesterday. He was 19 years old. Condolences, and any mail that you feel you want to send to his family (just to let them know that Chris touched your life in some way) can be sent to either the Mass Movement address, or to Britt from Assert (45 Chiltern Gardens, Dawley, Telford, TF4 2QQ, UK). All mail will be passed on to Chris' family. He's going to be sorely missed, as a friend, a band member and part of a scene that was only beginning to take note of what he was truly capable of. Chris—R.I.P mate. Later,

Tim/ Mass Movement

Dear MRR and Readers,

I've noticed recently that a lot of people are (properly) disgusted with the ebay record collecting culture. I think ebay can be cool, but as Rob Coons wrote about a while ago, it can give people a false impression of value. I think I have a solution.

As there is no real codification for how much punk records are worth you must really use your best judgment. Or, for most of us anyway, we trust how our friendly local record store prices a record. Let's say you're looking for the Killed By Death Antics of Johnny Dink and the Omnivorious Hedgehogs (the name's mine!) and ebay is asking $140 bucks. You've never seen a copy of this little gem so how should you know it's not a steal at $140?

For those of you able to access the internet (and presumably most ebay users do) go to http://www.gemm.com. I found this recently. It's a webspace where different stores can plug their wares... Toxic Ranch Texas and like 16,000 other stores. It's a fairly safe guess that you can find the record there and how much it would cost from the store. This has numerous benefits—let's say Smelly Joe's Vinyl is selling the Johnny Dink record for $100—you already know that you can get it for cheaper than ebay. It's a great way to gauge how much a record is worth. (Of course, some people will pay obscene amounts of money for bands they really like, but that's a different story). On the other (and better) side is the fact that you can see how good a deal you got. Let's say you get a first pressing red vinyl of Skrewdriver doing a split with Public Enemy. Rare indeed. And you get it for $5. You can check to see just how angry the seller is. Just thought I'd let you'll know. Peace!

Dustin Neuman/

dreadedcrustpunk@aol.com

Hi MRR!

I didn't read the April issue of the punk bible (it'll arrive at my usual record shop late this week), so I'm waiting to read this year April's Fool jokes. I remember the one you'd done two years ago (more or less), about MRR goin' online. As some of you may remember, that joke started a shitload of mails, with every kind of reaction. I know it was a joke, but lately I was thinking about it.

I do a punkzine called *I Don't Care!* The first issue was out in 1985 and it was always photocopied. It was the best thing to do, cheap and practical, and a way to express my views about the so-called scene, staying d.i.y. with a thing that was cheap for me to do and for the reader to have. I had done it until last year, and planned to do another. Actually I have sent a listing in BYOFL saying that I was working on it. But something happened that made me think about continuing the zine in a different format. You know, my zine wasn't a big one, it was like 100/200 copies per issue, with a maximum of 500/700 for the issues that were free (early 90's). Normally I needed 1 to 2 months to sell the first 100 copies. In late December 2001 I opened a little website, text-only, with columns, reviews and interviews. It was absolutely inexpensive: it was based on a site who offer free space on their server, I use a connection free of charge (I pay only the phone call), being pretty much unHTMLalphabetized, this site and others offer free templates to use. I just have to connect and type (and every time I learn something new about html, I can upgrade the quality of my site.)

So what? Well, I placed a counter (a li'l thing that count the accesses to my site and collect some statistics about them) and in 3 or 4 days I reached more than 100 accesses to the site.

You know, I feel a bit weird about it. I really love any kinda printed zine. I was (and still am) an avid zine collector and read pretty much everything that's print on paper, from books to mags to information on food packaging, but I have to admit that, compared to a shitty website like the one I have, a copied mag is pretty much useless.

Yeah, I know, 90% of the people who buy a zine are probably more interested in the things you write inside, and you cannot say the same about who visit a website. For example, I had like six or seven accesses from the States, two from Brazil, and one from Finland the first two days, and for a webzine written in Italian it's very difficult to believe that most of them *read* the things that I write... Anyway, the last issue of the copied version of my zine was read in the States by three people: the MRR shitworker who did a review and two other kids who ordered it. OK, that's all. Just want to share my thoughts. Have fun.

Vandalo

PS If anyone want to make my counter hypertrophic, or want to contribute especially with interviews, or want to send books/zines/records to review, or practice their Italian, you can check: http://idontcare!.blogspot.com or write me at vandalo@dragracer.com

PPS Any chance to have a space for webzines reviews in MRR?

Vandalo,

There's no chance of webzine reviews, but we have a columnist who's into such things. Contact Mark Hanford at netpunk@diehippiedie.com, and he'll mention your shit. Jeff M.

'Allo you lot,

Ah, this is a tough one to write... I mean, huge respect for MRR for still being here and also for being as good as you make it, but, well, I have a gripe: At the top of your reviews section you state "we will review all those that fall within our area" (stated as punk, garage, hardcore etc..). So why ain't you reviewed the comp I sent ya over four months ago? I even sent two copies, despite this being something that you only request for vinyl releases, & believe me, I don't have much money to play with. I suspect I know why the comp, "Flies On Toast and other rock 'n' roll habits", has been ignored.... although I hope deep down that I'm wrong. I think you elbowed it because it's a CDR release. If I'm wrong then consider me to have shut up already. But if I'm not wrong...

CDRs are the 21st century equivalent of tape-comps of the 80s. Bands can cheaply & cheerfully make discs in their own homes. How awesome is that?! I don't think MRR is in a position to look down on this format, after all, I'm sure most punks wouldn't turn their noses up at cheaper way of getting, or distributing, music. The Flies On Toast CDR is an 8 band, 16 song comp with a xeroxed cover.... now that's what I call punk!! After postage, blank CDs, printing and other little expenses I can send 'em anywhere for $6 or 6 euros (5 in NL). It has a coupla well-known bands and a few unknowns. Do you really have the right to deny these unknowns a chance to be heard? For anyone who's still reading, the bands are Antidote/ Anti-Clockwise/ Dogshit Sandwich/ P.M.S./ the Pits/ Love Kills/ Hippy War Generals/ Amphetamine Missionerries.

There will be a follow-up later this year, which will be 10 band comp attached to a grubby little fanzine.....

On a completely unrelated topic, if there's anyone in the Eindhoven area looking for a decent guitarist to join or start a band, gimme a shout! I'm into stuff like UK Subs, Discharge, DOA, Sick On The Bus, Post Regiment, The Stains, Nausea, External Menace.... aw, loadsa shit. No fuckin' ska though!!!!! Anyhoo MRR, keep up the (otherwise?) good work,

Steve/ Veelakker 1/ 5625 WJ/ Eindhoven/ the Netherlands/ punkrockexplosion@hotmail.com/ www.geocities.com/britpunk_nl

Steve,

It's true, we do not review CDRs in the records section. We send them to Erin in Portland who does write them up in her demos column. (She covers tapes, too.) If you're sending in a CDR, you may as well send it directly to her address (listed in the headers of the demos and records sections.) We haven't reviewed tapes in a long time, and don't review CDRs for the same reason... There's too much stuff coming out on vinyl and CD for us to keep us with any other formats. Jeff M.

Hey,

I picked picked up your mag up in Feb., and I can't say how fucking great it is. I've been in and out of the hardcore/punk scene for a while, but I've never really gotten too deep into it. Now, because I've dealt with issues and shit, I've come back to the scene. And, I'm finding out more and more support within the scene for one of the main reasons why I ran away from it—that being the fact that I'm gay. So, now that I've been finding all this good shit, I'm much more dedicated to hardcore/punk. I wanted to thank you guys for making a huge impact on my life—ie giving me confidence to confront people and making me feel good about myself.

Anyways, life story aside, I was wondering if it was possible to directly contact one of your columnists, Anonymous Boy, or if I had to go through you guys. Thanks a lot!

Art

Art,

In issue #226, Anonymous Boy listed this address: PO Box 1502/ Old Chelsea Station/ New York, NY 10011. Jeff M.

MRR and heroin addicts,

This letter is for anyone stuck in the grips of heroin addiction, especially chaosat333@hotmail.com (no computer myself). There's a drug called Bupanorphadine, I don't know if its spelled right, anyway it makes the kick not so harsh. The FDA (Food and Drug Administration) should be approving it soon as its still in experimental stages of the study here in Seattle. So if you don't want to go through nausea, chills, cramping, sweating, heat flashes, diarrhea and sleep loss, etc., etc., you may want to talk with your doctor. Just one pill a day, for as long as you feel you may need it. The kick was halfway pleasant with a little of the chills and sweats on the first day, the days that followed were practically normal and cravings were minimal to nothing. Hopefully this may help you out of dark basements and back into the music scene, myself going on seven months without heroin, from three grams a day to rebuilding the record collection I sold to feed my addiction, from destroyed to employed. DIY with a little help,

Mikey

Hello at *Maximum*,

Nice one to Mykel Board for the April Fool column, which got me thrown out of the Starbucus coffee shop in Brimingham, for laughing so much at your spoof column—best one yet!

Cheers,

Steve K.

PS I hope there are some very pissed off "PC" punks out there!

Dear MRR,

I wish I had my papers here with the details of what a scumbag Tom Ridge is. He totally screwed PA prisoners during his tenure as governor, as is a weasel-eyed tin horn dictator if I ever saw one. Ridge was elected on a "tough-on-crime" ticket after hyping the case of a commuted lifer (who got out and killed again) to the detriment of his opponent, who had sat on the board of pardons when the prisoner was released. (By the way, that was the first time in over a hundred years that a commuted murderer had killed again.) The result of all his pandering to racist crime hysteria was his election as governor. And thus the years of "Pennsylvania Über Alles" were ushered in. Commutations were nixed—not in the lawbooks officially, yet by practice. Ridge promised that a life

sentence meant "you will die a miserable death in state prison with no hope of clemency." Prior to his stint it was rare that a lifer did more than 20 years before being released by commutation. Also, prisons killed outdoor family visits, full uniforms became mandatory, educational; programs were gutted as they constituted in Ridge's eyes "a gift to the prisoners."

Oh, and here's where it gets real foul: Geo II and Ridge are old chums from college ("Another line Tommy boy?" "No thanks George, I've got a Future Fascists of America meeting tomorrow... Aw what the fuck, sure. Your pop gets the best shit George. *[sniff])* So when GWB went on the campaign trail, Ridge was up his ass like a dog meeting its own. He handed over the telephone contracts for all PA prisons to a Texas company (inmate collect calls shot up to 20 bux for 15 min, locally) as well as the contract for a closed circuit satellite provider for all state prisons—again, to a Texas based company.

Well, we all know Ridge didn't get the VP nomination—however, he knew already far ahead of the decision by GWB to go with Cheney that George was going to save him a "special" treat once the White House fell into the hands of a bloodthirsty (what was it, 158 executions in Texas?) lout. Ridge was promised a "cabinet-level position"—and ended up playing a Himmler-esque second fiddle to his school buddy's frothing war lust. So, I just wanted to write this out to follow up my little warning a few months back. I'm telling you, this fucker is nuts. Be aware, it's only a matter of time 'til the entire United States of America starts resembling the prison system that the powers that be have refined the methods of social control in over the past 200 years.

Well, in other news type stuff—happy belated 20th MRR! I've read off and on for about 15 of those years. Just think, next year you'll all be old enough to drink. Here's a little doodle I did for a b-day present to you'se. I'm in the hole, so I have plenty of doodle time. My best to the shitworkers...! Cheers,
Puke Rock Dave

Dear MRR,

Hi. My name's Keith, and I'm writing to you from York, PA. I wanted to relate to you some rather disturbing news. Over the past year or so, York has been in the news due to an investigation into the 1969 race riots that took place here. The mayor, who was a cop then, was indicted along with several members of a white gang in connection with the murder of a young black woman. He allegedly handed out ammunition and led a rally at a nearby park, chanting "white power!" over and over. Later that day, the woman and her friends were ambushed, the cops laughingly waving them through a roadblock, knowing full well what was in store for them.

Several racist groups have seized upon this incident, hoping to divide us again or start more trouble. The National Alliance, a white separatist group based in Maryland, posted leaflets all over town. In December, a local racist invited Matt Hale, the leader of "the World Church of the Creator," to come to York to give a talk at the library downtown. Hale travels from town to town from his base in Chicago, and has started numerous riots and bloody battles on the streets of the towns he "visits." Saturday, Jan. 12th, was announced as the day this fucker chose to infest York with his disgusting presence. Soon, Anti-Racist Action announced that they would hold a counter demonstration. As the day approached, the news got a lot scarier as the Aryan Nations, National Alliance, Hammerskins, and American Nazi Party announced that they would join in what would become a hellish day.

I didn't know what to expect as I drove towards the library that day. A state police helicopter buzzed overhead. Camera crews were scrambling around. I saw Nazis walking up the street towards the library. I saw black clad anarchist kids with dreads and masks covering their faces, carrying clubs and sawed off hockey sticks, marching up the street. I don't want to sound like a pussy, but the whole scene was ominous and scary. At 30, I was older than most of the ARA kids. My ex-girlfriend was there with some other people. I slipped in amongst the ARA people as they headed towards the police barricades. The cops ran alongside of us with their full riot gear on. The PA state cops are known for their brutality, and that day was no different. As we approached a parking lot, we saw a group of skins getting out of their pick up truck (they all drive trucks) waving these huge Nazi flags. We all started running towards them, yelling and cursing them. The cops on their horses blocked us before we could get to them. The pigs would run their horses right over us if we didn't get out of the way. I got slammed in the back and almost knocked off my feet.

The police had barricades set up around the library, so it got to the point where it was the boneheads on one side of the street and us on the other with the pigs in between. Cops were on the roof filming us. The ARA people kept yelling for him to jump. The cops were all facing us with their backs to the Nazis, protecting them. Insults and curses were traded back and forth across the street for an hour and a half or so before I got bored with the whole scene and left to pick up my daughter. I was nauseated by it all. Not long after I left, all hell broke loose. The meeting ended, and the racist scum started pouring out of the library, sieg heiling and spouting their bullshit. When they tried to get away, the ARA attacked, without regard to their personal safety. They take a lot of shit and criticism from different people, but they've got serious balls to do what they do. Not only do they take on psychotic armed racists with stick, but they have to go through vicious brutal cops to do it. The cops were having a field day, clubbing and macing the activists. A couple guys got arrested and beaten trying to stop the police horses from trampling on everyone. The ARA literally chased the Nazis out of town, catching them in alleys with cops nowhere in sight. They smashed the truck windows and faces of many of the boneheads. It's a great thing to see the bashers get bashed. The townspeople took part with equal zest, throwing garbage cans through windshields and beating the shit out of those fuckers. At one point, Nicole, my ex-, saw one skin in his truck getting his ass kicked. He floored it and intentionally hit one of the counter-demonstrators, sending him flying up over the hood. He winged a cop and ran down a twelve year old black girl. Luckily, no one was seriously hurt. He was arrested and charged with aggravated assault. About 25 or so people were arrested that day.

Recently, the Aryan Nations announced it would hold a "Happy Birthday Hitler" celebration in Penn Park on April 20th. Penn Park is in the

middle of the biggest black neighborhood in town. The city denied them a permit because the Human Relations group is holding a unity rally that day to block them. They said they'd come to York regardless. Although a part of me likes seeing the Nazis get theirs, I hate violence and I hope they don't come back. If the ARA hadn't come that day, I have no doubts that the Nazis would have stuck around all weekend, doing god knows what. The cops pretty much showed their true colors that day. Fuck fascism.
Keith/ York, PA

Greetings all!
Tony in Detroit here... Just wanted to touch base & mention a few things regarding the DS 13 show in Detroit & mention something regarding the Life Set Struggle interview I did...

Regarding the DS 13 gig in Detroit. A few things troubled me in the report that were kinda messed up & I wanted to correct them. Now of course I know that since DS 13 was passing thru they obviously were not aware of the circumstances of a lot of things but some things were written that may give our fine town a bad rap.

The altercation that happened was a ridiculous situation that occurred between an older guy who used to be into hardcore/crust & a straight edge kid. Some beer was being spilled by the older guy who was pretty drunk during Life SS's set & most of us just kind of pushed him off... Somehow something or the other transpired between the two parties & a punch was thrown. Myself & two other people immediately jumped in between them & that was the end of that. Or so we thought... Through out the night, several "crusty"/"political" types (mostly rich kids playing punk for the day...) said they were going to beatdown the edge kid & lots of "straightedge asshole" & the occasional "faggot" was thrown around by the local dog fuckers (one of the yuppies in training who was in on the jockesque crusty vengeance crew also whined that the show was "classist" because I dared ask for money to get in... hahaha... knowing said kid's financial background it was totally laughable...)

Anyways, I'm not saying the edge kid was right for hitting anyone but he was hardly the violent guy that he was possibly unintentionally painted in the report. Matter of fact this would indeed be the first time I have seen him raise his fists & now, post him being put thru the legal motions, it will be the last time he ever considers this sort of action.

As far as the skinhead vibe thing I'm not quite sure where that came in. There were a handful of skins there but hardly any questionable types. Ben from Bronson 335 & Graham of Life SS/Bronson & a small handful of others were the only other skins there. I'm not quite sure what to make of that... We have a lot of working class kids here & there is definitely a blue collar vibe to our hardcore scene but it's hardly a violent scene. I can only count 3 gigs in recent memory where a fight or altercation broke out... The two DS 13 gigs sadly had this happen (the first time was due to a woman being grabbed repeatedly by someone when DS played at Chad's house the first time I booked 'em) & at the What Happens Next?/ Lifes Halt/ Kung Fu Rick/ etc show where some goonie jock guy kept hitting kids that were trying to circle pit. Apparently he thought he was at a Slayer show & hitting random people to let out his hostility problems was cool. Regardless... We don't really see a lot of bad shit go down at gigs... & it really made me down about doing gigs to have that happen at the only show I fully booked that year... However I am still steadily plugging along with my label & still doing gigs from time to time...

I agree hands down about the covering of bands. It gets stale. I think kids just wanted to bug you guys since they did it last year at Chad's... I yelled for some of your songs as an encore but got kinda drowned out by kids yelling for NA... I personally would prefer if bands did more obscure covers than that... Everyone covers NA or Black Flag... Where the hell are the Deep Wound & Negative FX covers? Regardless, I think Michigan just loves their hometown heroes... from NA to the State to the Fix, Meatmen, etc. we have a rich history of hardcore & even the younger generations are about it. You should see the reaction when Easy Action (John Brannon of NA/ Laughing Hyenas & Ron Sakoski of the Necros/ Hyenas) do NA covers, how nuts kids are about it. Anyways the kids yelled along & danced to your own songs just as hard as the NA cover & the No For An Answer cover (hell I kept going despite accidentally getting a black eye during the NFAA cover [note the number of injuries during that one cover. Ha!]) I dunno. I would love to see more bands doing classic Euro/ Japanese covers but it remains to be seen... (Raw Power, Bastard, Lipcream, Terveet Kadet covers anyone?)

Anyways, I'm sorry that the rest of the tour wasn't so good & I hope you guys had a great time while you were here. It was great sitting up with 138 after the gig shooting the shit about Slayer (ahem..) & Poison Idea & it was great to book you guys & hang out with y'all again... Maybe soon enough we'll do it again?

Last note. It's Tony not Andy. Hahaha. You guys got it right in your thanks for the first tour (even got my last name right. That was a shock!) & I think this last one... Hahaha it was amusing to say the least... But a peach? Why thank you! Always glad to help out one of my all time fave bands! (The new LP shreds so hard by the way... my favorite LP of this past year hands down...)

Regarding the Life SS/ Bronson split that was mentioned in their interview... That will be coming out on my label so no split release. Eric Element is tied up with other stuff so it's all on me. The tests are in & are fucking raging. Kids take note & buy it up when it comes out. This isn't just label hype. This is seriously the Midwest record to top all others that came out in recent years! Even the art (thanks to Ernie of Lifes Halt) shreds hard... Enough bullshit... Just wanted to set the record straight on old Detroit.... —Tony

Hey fuckers,
This is Richard from The Index (Virginia, USA) writing to inform your readers that we've changed our name to The Death And Letters. I would appreciate it if this would appear in your letters column. I don't want people to get confused between us and The Index from Japan, who had their CD reviewed in MRR recently. Thank you,
Richard Johnson

Dept. of Corrections
In the "queer punk perspectives" section in issue #226, Jym's address was not listed. He can be reached at spunkyjym@hotmail.com.

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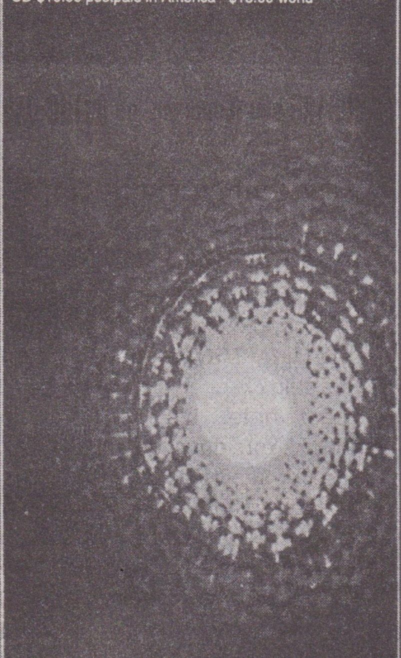

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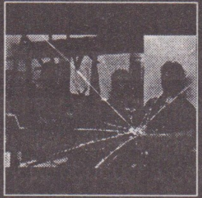

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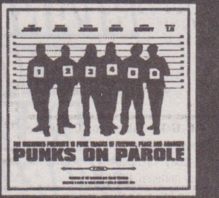

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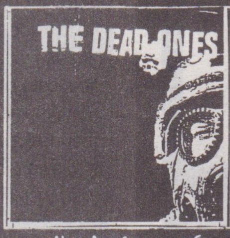

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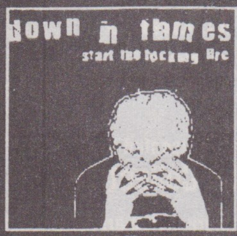

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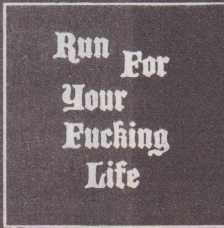

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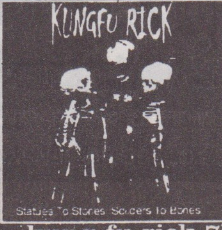

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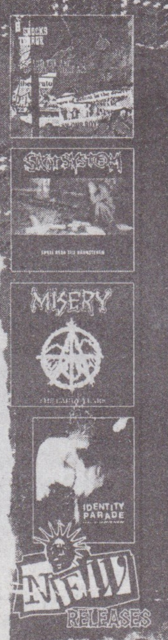

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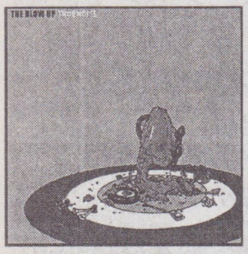

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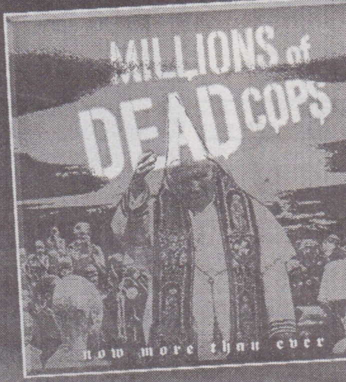

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COLUMNS

"Did they like your ping-ping?" asks Wendy as I stumble in the door around 7:30 am.

"My what?" I say as P.J., my eight pound Yorkshire Terrier, barks furiously at me, telling me not only that I'm super late coming home from The Motherfucker party, but that I smelled like booze and tobacco, and to top it off, I didn't bring him a treat.

"Ping-ping," Wendy repeats.

"Ping-ping?" I ask.

P.J. barks yes.

"It's called Bling-bling," I say, crossing my arms in front of my leather jacket, taking a stance like the guy who *copied* my look, Eminem.

"Ping-ping, bling-bling, whatever," Wendy says.

"Yo, beatch," I say with my best ghetto accent, "don't be dissing my bling-bling by calling it ping-ping. Besides, Yo, my ping-ping ain't no ping-ping, it's a big-thing!"

P.J. barks at me, much the same way he does at the guys down the block who are always riding skateboards and talking the same way.

"Sorry," I tell my dog.

"Well, you and your bling-bling take a shower and come to bed, me and the boy have been worried," Wendy explains.

Sighing, I take off my Parappa The Rapper 2(tm) gold chain and big gold dogbone which reads "Parappa" on it. I then hang in on the dresser across from the bed so I can stare at it until I fall asleep, thinking how cool I am.

Furious G. in the house, y'all.

*

It wasn't like I set out to be a gangsta punk rocker. Actually, it wasn't like I set out to be anything at all. But the bling-bling changed all that.

One day, upon opening my mail which contained mostly bills in Wendy's name, since I'm not an adult, and really don't know anything about responsibility, I came across a huge envelope from SCEA. Sony Computer Entertainment Of America.

Figuring it was a rad and bitching, wait, no make that fresh and word-up video game, I tore the thing open. Inside I found the newest version of Parappa The Rapper, called "Parappa The Rapper 2" for The PlayStation 2. I had loved the first one, so I knew this game was gonna rule. I mean, be the bomb.

The idea behind Parappa The Rapper and Parappa The Rapper 2 is you make this little home-dog rap along with others. In time. Which means, unlike most drummers I play with, you need rhythm. It's all about the "kick, punch, it's all in the mind" and the "chop chop."

Pick up the game, you'll understand. It's well worth it.

Anyway, so I get the game and I'm excited and all, but I also get this little cardboard box that weighs much more than it should. I open it, and to my surprise, it's swag.

Bling-bling swag.

The Parappa gold bone and gold chain.

At first I laugh. Then curse Sony. What do they think I am? A fuckin' gangsta punk? Like I'm gonna wear a huge gold chain around my neck like those thugs on MTV, with all those tattoos, and sing about my limo and bitches and ho's?

Also, what the fuck? Do I look like I'm from Long Island or Miami? That's the only two places I know of where Jews wear lots of gold.

So I look at the damn thing. And look at it some more. I pick it up, feel its weight, then I take out my leather jacket. I figure I can put it on the other shoulder buckle of my MC jacket, much like my Johnny Ramone(tm) chain, and get a few laughs.

But it doesn't look right.

So I wear it around my neck.

An hour later Wendy comes home and sees me wearing it.

"That looks great on you," she says, "where'd you get it?"

"Huh?" I say, wondering what the hell she was talking about. Other swag I've gotten, like construction helmets, Santa hats, and moto-cross t-shirts Wendy usually thinks are ugly when I think they are totally cool.

"That chain looks really cool," she says, "what's the bone part say?"

I explain that it's from Parappa The Rapper 2(tm).

"Oh," she says, all excited like, "I loved that game, and George, that thing looks really cool."

After asking her if she is serious for almost a full half-hour, I finally get it through my thick dyed-blonde head that it *may* actually be cool.

But, in the back of my mind, I know it's really just stupid, pathetic, and funny. Like my zebra skin pants and my Marky Ramone wig.

*

About a week or so later, I get invited to The Motherfucker party. The coolest ongoing party in New York City. Although it's held at different locations every other month or so, it's always a great time. My pal, Michael T., who does the best Dr. Frank-n-Furter this side of Tim Curry and Dori Hartley, always DJs, and spins nothing but hits, bitch. And the other guys who run it like Georgie Seville and Johnny Clown are the nicest. Really.

But the main thing that attracts me, and all my friends, is the pussy. It's wall to wall. Sure some of it has penises, but it's still pretty primo. And the boobies that go with it are always nice and round and firm, even if half of them are fake.

And the music. It's so loud there is no way you can have a deep conversation, so you really have no choice but to drink, dance, get drunk, and hit on anything, well, with two legs.

One, if you're kinky like that.

Anyway, so I get dressed up for The Motherfucker party that night which is at a place on Sixth Avenue. After spraying on only about a quarter of a bottle of Jovan Musk For Men, I look at my Parappa The Rapper 2(tm) bling-bling, and wonder if I should wear it. I mean, Motherfucker is full of people who look like they've either posed for *Playboy* or *Playgirl*, and I don't wanna look stupid.

Then I think about that.

When have I ever cared about looking stupid?

I wear women's stretch jeans, a motorcycle jacket with U.S. Pins, have bleached blonde hair, and my business card reads "Pussy" on it.

So I put on the bling-bling and wait for my pal Dave to pick me up so we can drive up there together. Actually, so I can get a free ride, and also talk out a game plan for the evening.

Dave arrives on-time, which for me, is about forty-five minutes early. So we pound back the booze. He and Jack Daniels. Me and Jose Cuervo.

Eventually, we both start to feel like we are gonna puke, so we know we're ready. We make our way up to Motherfucker.

Upon arriving, I'm greeted by door guy, Thomas, who is always nice to me.

"How ya doing tonight, George?" he asks.

I tell him I'm drunk and he tells me he knows, he can smell me. Then he gives Dave and I tickets to get in.

As we are about to walk into the place we are stopped by two huge black guys. I point this out only because Dave and I are two little Jewish guys. With big dicks, of course.

"Yo," says the larger of the two guys, "where'd ya get the bling-bling?"

"Wha?" I say to the guy as he blocks our way in.

"The bling-bling," he says pointing at my neck.

"Ping Pong?" I ask as Jose Cuervo starts knocking at the back of my throat.

"Bling-bling," Dave whispers in my ear, "remember, that's what I called your chain back at your apartment."

"Bling-bling?" I ask Dave.

"Yeah," says the huge bouncer.

"Oh," I say, finally understanding what he's asking, "you wanna know where I got by bling-bling!" I say, pointing to my gold chain and bone.

"Yeah," says the guy in a really deep voice.

"Well," I explain, "there's this game for The PlayStation and now The PlayStation2 called Parappa The Rapper and. well, now it's actually called Parappa The Rapper2 (tm) and...."

"Where'd ya get it?" the guy yells at me. I know the next time he's gonna ask me it's with his fist.

"Video game swag," I finally spit out.

The guy grabs the chain and bone around my neck and holds it tight. Then he calls over for his other big pal to have a look. As he squeezes it around my neck, I stand on my tippy-toes as there is only one way I like to be a well-hung Jew.

"Look at this," says the big guy to his friend.

By this point, I think Dave is as nervous as I am. He's almost shaking in his cowboy boots. I, on the other hand, have almost excepted death. I deserved it.

There I was, wearing a gangsta and black culture item around my neck, laughing at it. What made my punk rock so much better than their hip-hop? My leather jacket cooler than their leather pants? They probably figured I was making fun of them, and in a way, I was.

Death was imminent.

Finally, after both guys were done pawing at my chain and bone they let go of me.

"Umm," Dave says, in that way only Dave can say.

"Yo," says the guy who grabbed the chain to me.

"Yes?" I ask, hoping against all hope he isn't gonna say "I have to kill you now."

"That's some pretty sweet bling-bling," he says.

"Yeah," says his friend, "it's dope. Know where we can get one?"

After I finally exhale, and pick my beating heart off the sidewalk, I explain to the guys that they should e-mail Sony.

They thank me for the information, and pat me on the back as Dave and I walk in, telling me how cool my bling-bling is.

*

The rest of the night at Motherfucker was spent much in the same way. I expected people to tell me my bling-bling was stupid, but, instead, everyone told me how cool they thought it was, and asked where they could get one. Even chicks in bikinis would touch it and tell me "You have a big bone."

It was a hit.

Later that night, rather, morning, I arrived home to P.J. barking and Wendy asking about my "ping-ping." I finally hung it up before going to bed, but not before thinking about getting more bling-bling.

Hell, I'd look good in gold rings. Lots of 'em. They could spell out "Punk" on one hand, and "Rock" on the other. That'd be sweet. I mean, dope.

And my two top front teeth, they're all chipped and crap. Pretty soon I'm gonna have to get caps. Why not make them gold as well? Maybe even put a diamond in there.

I told all this to Wendy and she laughed. Then told me to get some sleep.

And I did.

And all I dreamt about was my new gold car, my gold guitar, and my gold house.

Cause I'm Furious G, ya'll.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. MC-FG@georgetabb.com
2. Punk rock, ya'll.
3. Spent some time in Portland, Oregon just now. Great little town, and some great fucking bands up there!
4. Dean Dean & The Sex Machines are gonna be the new princes of Punk Rock!
5. Peace Out.

This past Easter weekend had me doing a lot of fun things. I saw two terrific shows by touring bands the BRIEFS and the EYELINERS, as well as a gig by the great local band OSCAR AND THE PIDGIN SISTERS. At the Briefs gig, I chatted with Miss Georgia Peach of THE SHORT FUSES who was in town for a visit. Also at the gigs I yakkity-yakked with members of DICK ARMY and THE HECKLERS...and I thought to myself how cool it was to be an acquaintance of these and many other awesome bands on the scene. After all, my life could have turned out so different. I could have ended up being a Catholic priest like my mother once wanted me to be! This past Easter made me reflect on my upbringing.

When I was a boy I went up to the altar to receive my first Holy Communion. Yes, as the grandson of Italian immigrants, like most New Yorkers of Italian decent, I was being raised a Catholic. I remember that I put my hands out to take the Communion wafer but instead of giving it to me, the priest held the wafer higher and told me to open my mouth. When I did, he dropped the wafer in...and wouldn't you know it? That damn thing stuck to the roof of my mouth. I tried rubbing it off with my tongue but it didn't budge. The more I tried to get it off, the more cemented in place it became. Finally, I got up and left the church. I slipped behind the corner by the steps of St. Catherine's and while everyone else was still inside, I scraped the wafer off with my fingernail, and I spit it out. Ah relief! Then I went back in the church. Later on, I told my mother what I'd done. She let me know that I was very bad. That's because the wafer is the body of Christ, and it's never supposed to touch the ground. I remember asking something to the effect of; "but it's not *really* the body of Jesus is it?" (I guess that even at this young age I must have had some concept of symbolism.) But I was told; "No, when it's blessed by the priest it's really the body of Christ." I remember going behind the staircase in the basement, (one of my own little private hiding spots) and crying because I had rejected God. I thought; "Now I'm going to Hell and there was no way to stop it." Later that day I was told that all I'd have to do is swallow the wafer next time, and everything would be OK. So eventually, I did complete a "Holy Communion," but now it seems to me that this whole experience was the first time I had ever rejected God (even though it was totally unintentional.)

Today I reject the concept of God because I've grown to understand how idiotic it is. This happened to me in college. I took a course in Religion because I felt that I needed to do something about my flagging faith. I had many internal questions about the existence of God. Somehow I thought that by taking this course, I would understand all that there was to know about Religion and my faith would grow strong. In one of the first classes, Professor James Fennelly told us that "religions are self-authenticated." I wrote the definition down without really understanding it. The full meaning of it didn't hit me until much later when we started learning about astrology. Dr. Fennelly told us that "astrology is an agricultural based religion that first developed when people began to understand that phases of the moon and positions of the stars seemed to correlate to events in nature. It's based on the idea that the world is flat and fixed and the stars and planets move in the sky overhead. We can tell things about our lives and future based upon the position of these stars and planets. Astrology doesn't really work in the Southern Hemisphere because people see the night sky differently there." When I heard this I had to raise my hand to ask a question. "People still believe in astrology today..." I confusedly asked, "... so how can they believe in it if it's based upon the idea that the world is flat?" The Professor told me that; "people still believe in it because they say that it works. There's nothing startling about it. The Bible says that the world is flat too and people still believe in Christianity." Suddenly the room seemed to erupt. It seemed that some Christian students took offense to his statement. "YOU TELL ME WHERE IT SAYS IN THE BIBLE THAT THE WORLD IS FLAT! NAME A SCRIPTURE!" one student demanded. The professor was unperturbed. He replied "Oh, I can't name one off of the top of my head because there are so many references to the 'edge of the earth' and to the

'four corners of the earth.' That's because back when the Bible was written, everyone thought the world was flat." The Christian students would not accept this explanation. They argued that those phrases pertaining to the flat earth were just "figments of speech."

When I saw these students react, the full meaning of the definition "religions are self-authenticated" finally hit me. It didn't matter what facts were presented. What they believed to be authentic was authentic because they believed it to be authentic—case closed. These kids were flatly refusing to accept that the Bible says the world is flat. To them the Bible was not written by man, but by an infallible god who could not be wrong. Sure, when we say "four corners of the earth" in this day and age it *is* a figure of speech, but obviously it wasn't so back then. In the past the faithful *did* believe that the world was flat. That was one of the reasons why the Catholic Church persecuted Galileo when he said that the world was round! So it finally hit me. It's stupid to believe in something after it is proven to be untrue. That's just ignorant pigheadedness. The religious call it "faith" but it's just a nice word for "stubbornness" So that's when I thought: "If astrologers believed that the world was flat...and I think that it's dumb to believe in something that's proven to be untrue...then who am I to criticize other religions as false... when my *own* religion is also based on things that I *know* to be untrue!" A virgin can't give birth. A man can't part the sea by waving his arms and then have it come crashing back to drown an army. A man can't walk on water. No one lives to be over three hundred years old. Water can't be turned into wine. If I had never heard these crazy stories before and some guy sitting next to me in the subway started to tell them to me, I would get up and sit my ass over in another car to get away from the loony. But because they are all written down in some book written thousands of years ago, that's supposed to make it more credible. But if anything, that should make it all *less* credible.

Today, the more I look around me the more I seem to feel that everything that's wrong with the world is a result of the religions. Why are Jews and Muslims killing each other in Israel over possession of some "Holy" land? What does "god" even mean if some dirt has more "god" in it than a fellow human being?

I have to admit that I've tried to be tolerant of people's religions. But deep, deep down inside of me I have to admit that I *hate* the concept of God. I think the belief in a god is stupid and it's very, very hard for me to tolerate stupidity. Especially when such persons refuse to tolerate *me*, as a gay person and an atheist.

When I tell the religious that I'm an atheist they almost always invariably say. "I'm sorry for you." It kind of pisses me off. It makes me want to say; "You're sorry for me?? Hey, I'm not the one who needs a 'father' to watch over me and protect me. I'm old enough to look after myself. I don't try to be a good person just because I fear eternal torture if I don't. I try to be a good person for my *own* satisfaction. I'm not the one who has to turn to the freakin' bible for answers every time there's a crisis. I know how to stand on my own two feet and find my own answers! And *you're* sorry for *me*?"

I do not approve of the enforced atheism. Soviet Russia tried to do that by persecuting people for their beliefs. It doesn't work because oppressive authority always fails when they attempt to enforce one singular way of thinking. There will always be resistors who will defy the authority. Although I don't condone forced atheism, I do feel it is the only logical way to look at the world. It's also the only belief system that isn't trying to sell you something. Whenever someone starts to blather on about "spirituality" there's always some catch. There's a book they want you to buy, or a church that they want you to "donate" to, or a leader they want you to follow, or a cause they want you to dedicate your life to. Fuck all of them!

Today I watch the news and I see all of the Catholic priests molesting little boys and I say "Good! This is all coming out and it's going to destroy the Catholic church!" After all the guilt and misery this institution put me through, they deserve to be destroyed. And what about all the lives they have put in jeopardy with their opposition to safe-sex education? I remember the time I was passing out AIDS prevention leaflets at a Catholic boy's high school. A priest came out with a garbage pail, placed it by the entrance to the school, and ordered the boys to throw the leaflets away. I went up to this man and said "You know, if any of these boys get sick and die from AIDS you are going to have to live with what you did here today." He shouted back at me, "Why don't you just tell them not to run with whores if you want them to be healthy! Some subjects are too uncomfortable to teach, you know!" That made me really mad. So I said right back to him, "Look father, I was raised a Catholic and I know that you teach that we are all sinners and we all fall. So if you expect these boys to sin, then why do you want to prevent them from getting the information that could save their lives when they do fall?" Suddenly Mr. Big Mouth had nothing to say. I'd literally struck this dumb cluck speechless. He just looked at me with his mouth open. So finally I just impatiently asked... "Well?" Suddenly he yelled at the top of his lungs, "Go away and take your devil with you!" Then he retreated back into the school and sent someone else out to force the kids to toss their safe-sex leaflets in the trash. Oh brother, how corny was that? Since I actually started to make sense to him, it could only mean that I was possessed, and using the trickery of the Dark Lord's twisted tongue to confuse him, the guardian of righteousness. The solution? Shout "begone, Satan"...and then flee from the evil. This one must have become a priest because he saw the movie the EXORCIST too many times!

Sadly, the actions of these men really do affect people's lives. But we can gain some comfort in knowing that the Catholic Church will self-destruct eventually. There are almost no Catholic priests left anyway. Gay liberation saw to that. It used to be that the only men who became priests were gay. It's true! That's because it was the only occupation a gay guy could get where he wouldn't have to worry if someone was going to ask, "So, why aren't *you* married?" I think it may even be one of my mother's subconscious reasons to suggest to me that I should become a priest, way back before I'd ever came out of the closet. But who the hell really wants to live *that* kind of celibate life? Most heterosexual guys sure don't. The only reason gay guys ever pursued it in the first place was because there was nowhere else for them to go, and they believed that they would go to hell for their sin if they acted on their desires. When gay liberation finally happened, gays no longer felt pressured into a life of conformity to some acceptable societal rule about what an unmarried man was. That life certainly would not seem to have much appeal to many young gay guys now! That's why the Catholic church is wondering about whether they should finally allow priests to get married. After all, gay men are not joining up anymore and there doesn't seem to be any other way to get heterosexual men interested in priesthood. Before gay liberation, the Catholic Church always banked on the fact that they would have a steady supply of priests and nuns coming to them. Now gay men and lesbians would rather find lovers, and most priests and nuns are very, very old. Few younger people are attracted to the Catholic clergy. The only priests left seem to be child molesters. What a great racket for them! They can they get access to kids *and* have a holier-than-thou veneer of respectability. Not only that, they can be sure that if they ever got caught, it would be swept under the carpet by their superiors. That's what I think is going on anyway, although I don't know for a fact that this is true. Maybe the truth is that these child molesters became priests because they are in shame about their sexual desires and they are trying to dedicate their lives to God in hopes that he'll "wash away" these sins. But God does not help the molesters to reform and he never will. No one has ever been helped by God. He never existed.

OLD NEWS: I strongly recommend connecting to the website of investigative reporter Greg Palast to read about how Florida election secretary Katherine Harris ordered 57,700 ex-felons to be put on a list that barred them from voting in the Bush vs. Gore 2000 Presidential election. The problem was that these people weren't felons, they were merely Democrats. www.gregpalast.com

Over the past few months I've been pondering why New York City was attacked, I still have doubts to who the attackers were, considering it seems we would have invaded Afghanistan one way or another due to Dick Cheney's energy plan. But I've compiled a list of possibilities why one would choose New York and not someplace like Vegas or Orlando. Here is my list of possible suspects.

1. Someone who pissed his pants after spending an hour trying

to find a public restroom or any restroom that will allow you to use it without buying a $2 cup of coffee which will then make you have to pee again. There are actually two of those self-cleaning things that I'm always afraid I'll get stuck in and bleached to death near the BART station in San Francisco. Since its possible that about five or six million people could be waiting in line at one of them I don't recommend you trying them out here.

2. Someone deciding to take the lower level on The George Washington Bridge and fell into that seven-foot pothole that is a native's favorite. Gives it to that guy who just cut me off from Jersey a big kick in the ass so he remembers to stay there.

3. Actually anyone who drives in downtown everyday would probably be a suspect. I know a delivery driver who finds reason to pull out his switchblade and go at cars that double park in front of him, sometimes he "writes his name and dot's the I's" on the guys tires as well.

4. Someone trying to find a parking spot the night they had the World Summit. Yeah I know I'm an idiot for driving downtown when there were 90 protests going on simultaneously, but the Sea Monkeys had a show. I did miss the show looking for a parking spot.

5. The woman at the information desk at Port Authority Bus Terminal. "What do you mean where do I collect my baggage! It's still sitting next to the bus dumbass!"

6. Anyone who went to NYC with the promise of great pizza and happened to go to Rays on the corner of St. Marks Pl.

7. Anyone who was told Mars Bar is a good place to hang out.

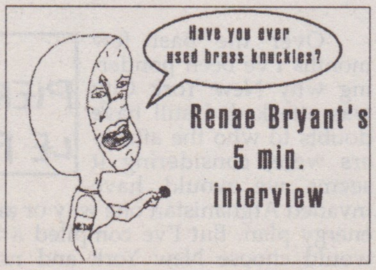
8. Anyone who got a ticket for peeing in an alley because they couldn't find a restroom, drinking in street because they can't afford bar drinks, squeegeeing their windows because some angry deliveryman dumped his lunch on it, or dancing at a club because dancing is illegal.

9. The guy who lives next to George Tabb and has to hear him talk about his dog all the time.

Anyhow I went to visit my cousin in Orange County, California last week, and all I can say is, I found a new love for New York. It's hard to believe Americans live under such horribly boring conditions and pay through the nose for it. Oh, housing developments and chain stores what a life! The night I got there it rained and I stepped on 20 disgusting snails on the way up to his apartment. The worst think I've ever stepped in here was bum shit. I'd take bum shit over a snail anyway. I went to visit my friend Sarah in San Diego and with in her wisdom of insects and spiders she told me the snails were probably introduced. We looked it up and it figures that they are the result of 19 century Frenchmen who started up a pyramid scheme selling snail farms to disgruntled gold miners. I'm quite happy with where I live, there's always some good drama, the sewer cleaner guy across the street is always screaming at his wife and kids, throwing stuff out the window, I have a new landlord who is Albanian (if you remember some time back someone wrote a letter accusing me of being racist towards Albanians for some reason) well now I officially am, OK? They're building some sort of manufacturing facility in the basement and they cut my bike chain. Hey if that isn't enough to start World War I , I dunno what is.

So even though everyone has to pee and drive like they have to pee, NYC is still the best place to be, they can drop as many planes, trains, and double decker buses they want on us and I'm staying.

bill@candids.com



Where do I start? Just recently it came to my attention that people actually read my column. The person that pointed this out to me had a grudge against me for a year and a half because I mentioned their name in my column.

It was a conversation that went like this:

"Hi, I'm Renae," I asserted.

"I'm Brian. This is ____________," said Brian.

"We know each other," answered ____________.

"Wow, I didn't even recognize you. How are you?" I asked innocently enough.

"Good. Thanks for the stuff you sent...and thanks for mentioning me in your column," said ______________.

"What? When did I mention you in my column? I don't even remember what I wrote. It couldn't have been that bad. Oh, wait...I remember mentioning you, but I can't remember why. I really don't think that anyone actually reads my column. I don't think about that when I write it. What did I write?" I asked in all sincerity.

"I read your column every month. I was hooked. It was like reading someone's diary, getting into their life for ten minutes. Then I open it up one month and there's my name. You made me sound like a dick. I showed _________ and __________ and they told me to ignore you," __________ answered.

"I can't believe you were mad at me. I'm a really nice girl. Oh, sure. George Tabb can write about fucking some nazi girl and cumming all over her swastika tattoo. I write something I can't even fucking remember and I get busted," I asserted.

"I guess I was just being a dumb boy," _________ concluded.

"Well, I suppose I am in big trouble now because my last column I tattled on the a few people in the scene, including myself," I said and then related last month's column, "Great."

So, with that when time allowed I pulled the old issues of *MRR* out. I have been writing since 1996. You do the math. It's quite a few columns. Once I started my personal diatribes I suppose it got crazy. I actually shocked myself when I went back and read some of them. I always tattle on myself and tell the whole truth with more details than anyone really wants to know. I've written about shit that I wish I could have read about when I was a teenager. It would have made me feel a little more human. I don't really care if people think I'm a dork. I am.

Anyone that has read any of my columns knows that when I am at a loss for topic or am writing the column at the last minute I will write about sexuality. So here is another column for me to look back on in a year and say to myself, "What was I thinking?" This is going to be about bisexuality.

The first person to give me their opinion on bisexuality was my friend Maggie. Maggie, who I always knew as completely gay, told me one day that she was dating a man.

"What?" I asked, "I thought you were gay!"

"I believe that all human beings are bisexual. Some act on it, some don't," she instructed me, "and besides you will see in your experience with your lesbian friends, that whenever there is a drought on available women, many lesbians will have relationships with men."

Well, this was news to me. Over the last few years I have found Maggie's words to be valid. At 21 it caused me to examine my own sexuality. Was I bisexual? When I was a teen I remember having dreams that I was a guy fucking a woman, but never myself. I used to masturbate to the Sears lingerie catalog as a kid, just like guys. When I was a teen I'd get off to the Fredrick's of Hollywood catalog. Of course I'd imagine fucking a woman...as a guy. Then one night it happened. I had this dream that I was in a car with this woman and I went down on her, as myself. It was crazy. I woke up tripping out. Does this mean I am gay? So I called my friend Tina. She admitted to me that she had been with a woman. Oh...

"So am I gay?" I asked her, "I like dick. I mean I really like dick. How can I be gay?"

"You're just turned on by women. That doesn't mean you're gay," she informed me.

"Okay," I said relieved.

Then I went through my drinking stage. Liquor makes me controlled completely by desires of my pussy. So with my boyfriend (at the time) on my arm we got drunk at a club. This girl comes up to me and says she wants to fuck me.

"What?!?" I asked.

"Come home with me," she said.

"I have a boyfriend," I tried to inform her.

"I don't want to be with him. I want to be with you, but he can watch," she said.

So, I checked in with him and of course he was all for it.

So, I had my first quasi-lesbian experience. I say quasi because I wouldn't let her go down on me.

Next, I'm drunk at the bar I worked at. It was my last day. Susanne the shooter girl comes up to my beer bar tub and starts flirting with me. We go into the bathroom and I start making out with her. She wanted me to take her home but I chickened out.

Then T. (one of my favorite bi-encounters). She was this Este Lauder looking brunette, hot as fuck. She told her boyfriend to tell my boyfriend that she wanted to get together with me. So the four of us met at my house. Her and I start to get together and the boyfriends tear us apart so they can get theirs. That was a waste because I really wanted to fuck her.

Next an ex-boyfriend/tattoo artist set me up with his boss, an older lesbian. I thought that it would be cool, maybe I could be in a lesbian relationship as long as there was some strap-on action. I went further with her than any other woman. She gave me an education. Unfortunately, I was "bisexual." In the lesbian community that's the worst you can be. That didn't last too long.

Then the drought. I never sought out women. Somehow it would always work out that they would approach me. I suppose some people thought I was a lesbian. I was at a show and this band sent this girl over to me. She said,

"So, the guys tell me you're gay."

"No, I'm bisexual, that's worse," I respond.

Next. This one was totally unexpected because at this time I was completely sober. I was at the dungeon. Bad ass Mistress Diana... the submissive girls kind of looked up to the dominants. This submissive Monique was a Latin Jew. She had hair down to her tight ass. She was a stripper and a junior high school teacher. She was so fucking hot. We were at the dungeon and she started rubbing my back. Then she asked if she could come home with me. So, I call my fiance (1996). He said, "Sure bring her out, we'll see what happens." He and I had already discussed our willingness to explore threesomes so I could continue to be with women, as long as he could watch.

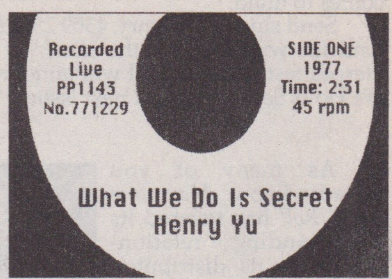
Well, watch he did. I, of course felt like a kid in a candy store. He left in the morning not exactly happy to leave her and me in his bed. Later on he informed me that he has a theory about me. He thinks I am a man trapped in a woman's body. I wanted to ask him, "Doesn't that make you gay too?" Anyway. After I lose the fiance, she and I hooked up again. I started tripping on the fake boobs and stripping and decided that maybe it wasn't such a good idea. On top of it all she was an extremely high-maintenance girl.

Next. On our last tour I was closer to getting laid by a girl than the guys in my band. We played in Portland and this girl walked by and grabbed my ass, a really cute girl. I thought it was my imagination and ignored her. Then she came up to me and invited me to go to the bathroom with her. I started getting the picture. So I hung out with her at the club. I even thought about getting with her and then I realized that she was totally drunk. I don't drink anymore and it was a total turnoff. I felt like I was taking advantage of her. Somehow I became the "nice guy." My bandmates were tripping. It was crazy.

So, there aren't any females lovers in my life and I'm pretty well interested in dick. I am addicted to porn though. I love porno zines and fem on fem films. When I masturbate I think of the following: sometimes the guy I'm currently fucking...most of the time women. Funny thing is I love fucking men. I am a pro-porn feminist. Even as a Women's Studies/Ethnic Studies major, I was a pro-porn feminist. In my columns I "go off" on much that probably doesn't make me sound like a feminist. I am. Perhaps next month have a serious diatribe on feminism. Everyone that comes to my house laughs at me because I have a "How to be a Fabulous Feminist" poster framed on my bathroom wall. I am a feminist. I just don't fit neatly into most people's paradigm of what a feminist is supposed to be. To most lesbians I'm probably the typical bisexual girl. Oh, well.

Now I have tattled on myself, by revealing even more of my humanity. It's OK. If you don't like it, don't read it. Next month I'll try to be a little more planned in my column so I won't babble as much. As always you can reach me at webmistress@ontherag.net or PO Box 251, Norco, CA 92860-0251. Thanks for reading and try not to carry a grudge against me or assume, if you're a woman, I'm going to try to fuck you.

Mail Bonding



My bulging box of mailhood overfloweth with load. The variety is pulpy and derived from petroleum-by-products. Solicitations for nerdfare backfires with entries by bands like the PISS SHIVERS. So yrs tru plays it cool and reviews said roughage.

Please try to keep this magazine out of your mouth. Todd Killings drops off a coupla *Horizontal Action*'s, #7 and #8 to be precise. #8 roars with a grand GIZMOS innerview of the Kenne variety. Transcriber of Kenne-speak captures his lyricism perfectly paced like Beat poetry gone berserk. (www.horizontalaction.com)

Glam Preserves

Glam infiltrates the Rave Up Records roster this month with one from each coast. CHAINSAW posture their way in from the West, while THE BRATS stagger in from the East. CHAINSAW's ominous smoking jacket cum leather look gives way to hard plodding bar band territory. Side B's live set is slightly less tepid, but not enough to pull them out of permanent obscurity.

Five girly boys and way way too much hair. Too much pant around the ankles. Post DOLLS outfit the BRATS, glittered and flared with Rod Stew hair and even the pursed lips cone hither with their "Criminal Guitar" LP, a combo of the usual miasma of practice and demo sessions, live tracks and the odd studio track. "Keep Doin" start things off with primitive wannabe licks and a little too much boogie for these bones. Punk it hardly t'ain't but if you wanna strut around in your underwear with a feather boa and do the Charleston, OK, you got it here. Historical document—yes. A stepping stone to something bigger—hopefully.

Rick Rivets, fresh from a hop from the BRATS and a pre-Sylvain DOLLS, fronted the CORPSE GRINDERS, purveyors of trash rock and now unearthed on Raveup's recent *Grind On* LP. Their lone 45 is represented via demo versions on side A, with the rest ranging from the very DOLLS boogie sound of "Bulldog" to the faster, punkier "Price of Meat" and "Infiltration". Not sure what the overlap is with the LP that came out on New Rose in the 80s since my copy is still in storage, but anyhow, pretty good record. Liner notes are great. My fave track is "Anything Goes."

In A Roman Mood

I first saw this record maybe in the pages of the Happy Squid catalog back in the day, but it weren't till some musical pals of mine did a cover of their "Son Of Satan" that put the ROMANS on the map for me. Further observation had me finding these guys as ex-so and so's, not just any, mind you, but bands that I really liked, like HUMAN HANDS, GREEN ON RED, DEADBEATS. Heck, supergroup is an ironic term for a band whose records spiraled into obscurity, but nearly forescore later, this re-ish'll hopefully toss'em back at the top of the heap for their 15 minutes.

You Only Live Once was their first album, originally released in '83. An eclectic blend of what was cool still sounds cool today. Surf, punk, goth, psychedelic, and tinges of the what was sort of the "New American Sound," a route that a lot of LA bands were taking at the time, such as X on their *Fourth Of July* album or the post-DILS outfit RANK AND FILE or GREEN ON RED and MEAT PUPPETS go country. If this first release on the label is any indication, Warning Label Records might just become the new Razor & Tie, a label from the early 90s that put out numerous and gratifying near hits and minor classics. Watch for them. (www.warninglabelrecords.com)

Phango Tango

HUNG PHANG is a cup, no make that an English pint, of hot arty piss led by old man Dave. A pervasive DEATH OF SAMANTHA vibe, with snarled vocals and minor chord riffage, slightly outta control sputtering, an out of tunefulness sprawl that deploys elements of the BURMA axis. Recorded awhile ago, this is a shoulda coulda woulda been a contender and who knows, maybe will see the light of day as a bona fide release rather than a burned demo.

Piss Shivers

The P.S. make me laff and weep at the loins. Sophomoric to a fault with thuggy instrumentation to match, they might just provide limited globs of delight under the right influence. Near beer comes to mind.

Send sludge to Henry, 4309 23rd St, San Francisco, CA, 94114. And life will never be the same. By the way, the results of my Herpes test is back and I will announce the winners of the What We Do Is Secret STD test next issue.

As many of you already know, *Maximum RockNRoll* has severed its long-standing relationship with its distributor, Mordam. Mordam Distribution was founded by former *MRR* staff/radio member Ruth Schwartz in the mid 80s. Mordam was originally founded as an alternative to the established music business-oriented record distributors of the day. Over the years, Mordam has grown to be one of the largest, if not the largest, independent record distributor. Mordam owes much of its success to the continued popularity of the Dead Kennedy's and the rise of pop punk in the early 90s. However, in recent years Mordam has lost many of its staple labels such as Lookout, the Dead Kennedy's back catalog, Man's Ruin, and Kill Rock Stars. Although it has added a number of new labels to its stable, Mordam is still floundering and looking for new angles to increase sales. One such angle is to start carrying major label licensed records. A good example would be a major label band which does a vinyl version of their latest release on a "indy" label. The staff of *MRR* felt that this level of cooperation with major labels and the corporate music industry would lead down a "slippery slope" towards further co-option of punk culture by major labels and the big music business. Therefore, *MRR* has decided to drop Mordam as its distributor before things go any further down this slippery slope.

Personally I haven't been too crazy about Mordam for the last eight or ten years. Founded on the popularity of hardcore punk, I feel that Mordam turned its back on this music in when it went out of style and only rushed back into the fray (picking up Sound Pollution and Six Weeks) when the Hardcore Revival was already in full swing. Aside from the Prank label and the DK's back catalog, Mordam has mostly focused on garage, indie rock, and pop punk for the last decade. I feel that this recent decision to cooperate with major labels shows pretty much for good that Mordam has lost touch with the underground that spawned it and is moving up and out of the underground rather than working to support it. That's OK for them, I guess, but not for those of us who feel strongly about preserving our independence and the artistic integrity of underground, DIY, hardcore punk rock. The only thing that bothers me is that if financially troubled Mordam folds, it will probably drastically set back three of my favorite labels, Prank, Six Weeks, and Sound Pollution. I've always resisted the temptation to put all my proverbial eggs in one basket, and those labels' choice to use Mordam as an exclusive distributor, though based on practical considerations (i.e. getting paid) may come back to haunt them. Meanwhile, those of us whose labels are using a diversified number of distributors and doing a lot of trading will continue to get our records to the kids.

Regarding the situation with *MRR*—when the Mordam deal was called off, Arwen and Mike decided to cut down the print run and scrambled to find new outlets of distribution. Now is the time for all of us who care about *MRR*, the magazine which has served our culture for twenty years, to pull together and ensure its future survival. The DIY punk scene has evolved an amazing network of distribution from one-stops, to mail orders, to stores, to kids selling out of crates at shows to get the music to the people independent of the corporate music business. I urge everyone at every level of this distribution network to make sure they are stocking *MRR* and getting it to where it needs to be, in the hands of punk music fans around the world. No one should have to say "I'd like to get *MRR*, but I can't find it around here." Ask for it at stores, buy a subscription, or best yet, buy copies in bulk and sell them at shows. One of the areas where *MRR* has suffered in the past few years is in distribution overseas, especially after the last crippling postage hike. Overseas customers might want to look into having bundles shipped via the "M Bag" rate, which is a special postal rate for bundles of publications. *MRR* is now available from Ebullition, Sound Idea, No Idea, Revolver, Last Gasp, or you can order bundles of magazines direct from *MRR* for only 1.50 each in quantities of five or more. I can't imagine anyone should have too much trouble getting rid of five or ten copies, especially if you sell it for less than the cover price.

It's always been my opinion that DIY punk rock should strive to be better than the mainstream music business. Because we care about and believe in this music we should treat it as a labor of love rather than just moving some units. Our distribution network should be able to get *MRR* into every barn, basement, dorm room, and trailer park in America more efficiently and at a lower cost than corporate magazine distributors would.

I'm on tour with Nine Shocks Terror as I write this, hanging around the *MRR* office, taping the Massacre 68 LP and loading up on coffee before the Oakland show. The tour has been great so far and there's another week to go. I had a run of bad luck the few weeks before the tour began, involving both vehicles to be used for the Nine Shocks and Vitamin X tours breaking down at once and needing expensive repairs or replacement. Now I'm $12,000 further in the hole for hardcore than I was just a few weeks ago. I don't really care though—like the dude in *Repo Man*, my "credit is spotless" and I'm doing what I want to do, bringing hardcore music to the people. I believe in Nine Shocks Terror, DS 13, and Vitamin X enough to do what it takes to get them in front of people who I hope will be as blown away by their hardcore power as I am. I'll write more about the Nine Shocks tour, the Vitamin X tour, the Amdi Pedersens Arme tour and Thrash Fest 3/Chicago Fest 2.5 next month, as right now events are still unfolding before my eyes.

Max wrote in the last issue of *Short Fast and Loud* about CDs and where they fit into the DIY hardcore movement. Like Max, I oppose CDs on aesthetic and political grounds—I've written before about how much I don't like the shiny little corporate fuckers in the dumb plastic boxes. Yet my label has now released seven CDs. I was dragged kicking and screaming into the CD world, mostly as the insistence of bands who wanted their material available on both formats. I do think CDs are useful for discographies, and I've become aware that in parts of the world such as Southeast Asia where punk is becoming more popular, there is no vinyl tradition and CD and cassette are the only formats most people have access to.

Max, however, took issue with CD pricing and invited people to give their opinions on the subject, so here's mine. I price my LPs and CDs the same both wholesale ($5.50 each) and retail ($8 ppd. or at gigs) However, the LPs cost about $2.75-$3.75 each to make, while the CDs cost about $1.50 each. Realistically, the production costs of a CD are closer to that of a 7" than an LP yet typically sell for quite a bit more than vinyl LPs and many times that of a 7". Why is this? Because "that's the way it is." We've grown accustomed to paying these prices and it would take a pretty radical shake up to get people to start paying more for LPs and 7"s and less for CDs than they are used to. Most DIY labels lose money or break even on their vinyl releases, yet turn a profit on CDs (and for those labels that do them, t-shirts). As much as I hate CDs, they are one of the only areas of my label that actually makes money. I'd like to direct everyone to the column I wrote a few issues back about the costs incurred in running a DIY record label if you want to know where the money actually goes. Trust me, it's not going into payments on a Jacuzzi or Cadillac for most DIY label tycoons. I can just scrape by the way things are—if CD prices were to go down (which is what I think Max is getting at) vinyl prices would have to go up. I think things just barely work out the way they are, and I for one am not eager to change it.

I can't let a whole column go by without talking about a little music. Tear It Up's new LP *Nothing to Nothing* is a modern classic. I've always been a fan of this band but they've moved beyond their simple fast thrash to a more Black Flag-esqe attack that still packs a magnum wallop. There is a sort of underlying hard rock groove to this LP too that almost hearkens back to the

days when DYS and SSD started incorporating an AC/DC influence into their songs. But that's not a fair comparison, because those bands sucked when they moved in a rock direction and Tear It Up is still a raging hardcore band, just with a little bit of this rock influence beneath the surface. "Don't Call Me Tonight" and the title track are so amazingly powerful it defies description. If you've always been a Tear It Up fan, you'll love this record—if you've never heard Tear It Up, get this record. Make Tear It Up yours!

V/A Histeria. if you see this record, buy it—like most of Martin's releases it is super limited and the demand will far exceed the supply. I hate to see good DIY hardcore records selling for three times their price on eBay two months after they are released, but I'm afraid that's par for the course with this and the Limp Wrist LP. This comp is a total rager featuring some of the best DIY hardcore bands on earth: Life's Halt, Seein Red, Limp Wrist, E 150, Esperanza, DS 13, Deathreat, Sin Orden, and Melee. The Limp Wrist tracks are solid gold. Almost everyone I know has been singing along to "ode" before the end of the song the first time they heard it. The E 150, Sin Orden and Life's Halt tracks also especially stand out.

Limp Wrist LP—probably long out of print by the time you read this, but hopefully will be repressed. Amazing raw fast hardcore with over-the-top lyrics. This will start a pit in any living room the first time you spin it.

Sick Terror—crucial new Brazilian band that has a 7" and a split LP with death metal band Legion. This is raw, fast HC that mixes the classic Brazilian HC styles of RDP and Olho Seco with modern fast core. Really sick stuff, they hope to do some releases on a US label and tour here next year.

Dios Hastio—this Peruvian band is one of the rawest, most brutal hardcore bands I've heard in a long time. They have several 7"s and splits, most recently one with Japan's Futures. The poor production on their records can't hide the raw power and brutality of this band. The anger and rage just blasts out of the speakers like a blow to the head.

There are hundreds more great hardcore records to talk about, but I have to go drive the gear to the Oakland Nine Shocks show. Until next month, hardcore rules!

Fuck. OK, so I know last time I laid down a whole spiel about this month's column sticking to the punk and hardcore. Wrong as usual. I finally got a reader submission about their experiences with the dreadful world of mental illness. Motherfuckers. It sucks that people have to go through this shit. Anyway, this dude's name is Curt. If I remember right, he's about 16 and from the great state of Ohio. I wonder if he's too young to remember THE ADVERSIVES from outside Boise. Man, I loved that 7" on Farmhouse. Fuck, anyway, here's the guy's story.

Every day I am forced to do things I don't want to do. If I refuse I am met with crippling anxiety and thoughts that burn at my mind. I live with a disorder that seems absurd to most everyone, yet to me it is the center of my life. I have OCD (Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder) and I fucking hate it.

I can relate to Wells' anxiety to some extent, despite our problems being very different. I avoid certain things like a plague, and I get the same sick panic he describes. I imagine most observers to our strange world scoff and mock us for our "weakness" to these fucking disorders. I would like to clarify that it is no "weakness" on our part; it is a legitimate disease, as legit as cancer. Except it is a disease of the brain, and at times this psychological pain can be worse than physical pain.

With physical pain, you usually have some hope of relief, or can take a pill and relieve it. With this psychological pain, we can have hope, and can take pills, but they only help to some extent. It is generally a life-long disease that affects us in our most intimate place, our mind.

I am met with horrible feelings, horrible anxiety, to such an extent that I physically attempt to relieve these problems. This relieves the problem temporarily, but in retrospect it only gives the disorder/disease more power over me.

I know what's rational and what's not, I see this as I am bombarded with panic. But the panic overwhelms me, and I give in. I do not enjoy this way of life, but it's the price I pay for living.

Even now I am experiencing OCD. It affects me every day, usually all day, and is very painful. I see how many people with similar disorders resort to suicide or intense drug abuse in an attempt to flush away these feeling they are stricken with. Millions of people worldwide suffer daily and I am one of them. There is hope, and even in the battlefield I try to maintain this hope. It's nice to know I'm not alone, and I want to thank Wells for his column, and his insights. I have heard the phrase "What doesn't kill me, makes me stronger." I am unsure how I stand on this. Although I could switch it around and say, "Whatever doesn't kill it (the disorder) makes it stronger." I am met with confusion and panic, I am a citizen of insanity.

My daily regimen of pharmaceuticals may help, much like a gun helps a soldier to defend himself against the enemy. Sometimes I feel like I am stuck with a BB Gun, whereas this enemy is attacking me with a tank.

OK, it's me, Wells, again. You can get in touch with Curt at stankho@neo.rr.com.

Alright, so I was pumped up all month about not writing mental illness shit this time around. I was just going to lay down words on the punk and hardcore. I have tons of shit planned for that, like label profiles, ethical problems I've run into with distribution, and a complete manifesto for why I should no longer participate in punk. But, fuckin' a. Since I'm splitting a column this month, I might as well keep with the theme.

I have reapplied myself to getting better. My ongoing confrontation with Panic Disorder and Agoraphobia has been in some pretty dire straights lately. I've been fucked and living in a dark and shitty world. But I'm trying to get back on track with my recovery.

I got extremely fucking fed up last week. You see, I run a business with my two pals, Rob and Chuck. They're totally hip to where I'm at with shit. Both of them are sympathetic and help me out as much as they can. They are so fucking understanding that it's been totally cool with them that I've been leaving an hour early every day for the past four months. I have this bullshit phobia about rush hour traffic. Whatever.

So, shit with me getting worse came to a head last week. I have this totally weird safety attached to Rob and Chuck. Like, I feel less exposed and susceptible to panic when they are around. They were both leaving the office for different reasons on Thursday, and I kinda started to freak. So, before they were both gone, I just left. It was the middle of the day. I own this business with these dudes, and I'm fucking running home in the middle of the day with my tail between my legs. That's a fucking liability. And it's not fair to them.

As I'm driving home I come to the realization that while my bullshit anxiety sucks for me, now it's also affecting other people, too. Rob and Chuck both have families and mortgages and shit. My performance at works totally impacts these dudes' lives.

Now, I could totally being doing more to work toward getting better. In fact, at this point in my life, I'm fucking really lazy in that department. I basically don't do shit to work toward the goal of improving my situation with anxiety. I don't know why, but I guess it's wrapped up in depression and self-worth and shit. Whatever. This shit is starting to sound like Oprah or some shit. Fuck.

Anyway, I wind up at Border Books passing the MRR with DS-13 on the cover, and heading toward the self-help section. What the fuck! I walk out of there with *The Idiots Guide to Conquering Fear and Anxiety*. I figure I'm both an idiot and suffer from fear and anxiety. This book must be right for me.

So at some point after that, on my way home, I come up with an idea. A contract. If I'm not going to try and get better for myself, I should at least do it for these guys. I drafted and signed a preliminary contract outlining my plans. I saved a copy for myself and gave a copy each to Rob and Chuck. They said it wasn't necessary, but I think it is. I've agreed to have my final contract finished and signed in a few days. It seems to be work-

ing so far. Just the decision to try this has already given me a bit more strength in shit.

I think the contract idea is going to work out. I hope it does. It's so easy for me to get lazy and ignore what I'm supposed to be doing when I'm the only one I answer to. Even having to answer to a shrink helps, but it's a kind of expensive motivation. According to my contract, I guess I'll be looking forward to shit like cardiovascular workouts at the gym every day, a change in my diet, starting up exposure therapy again, sticking to my medication schedule better, and other shit like that. This is the kind of stuff I'm supposed to be doing.

I should be doing it for myself, but maybe doing it for someone else will make me stick to it a little bit better. Who knows? I'll fucking try anything. Wish me luck!

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Past "Oh Man What The Fuck!?!??!" columns are available on the web at www.trafficviolation.com. Just scroll down to my ugly mug and click on it.

I'm glad ANTHRAX decided to keep their name: Wells Tipley, PO Box 772, East Setauket, NY, 11733 USA. Or e-mail me at wells@trafficviolation.com.

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END NOTES:

1. I had a dream that I lived in a town that was all monochromatic black and white clipart. Ron from DEVOLA lived there. It was mint. I was also pretty pumped because all the clipart people still had their guts inside them, so I figured that guy from COMBATWOUNDEDVETERAN probably wasn't there.
2. I got a promo of the new ARMY OF PONCH album on No Idea. I was cautious at first, but once I found out there were no ex-members of PALATKA I decided it was totally mint. Fucking ex-members.
3. I'm still looking for someone to make me a 3 FINGER SPREAD discography tape. You'd think Arwen or Mike would have coordinated their way over to the famed MRR library to make me one by now, but I guess not.
4. I found a .midi file on the internet of MANOWAR's epic "Hail to England." Hail to me!
5. Going to Take Back The Night to pick up on girls makes me an asshole, right? Yeah, I thought so.
6. Mike, do I lose punk points for using 'dire straights' in my column? I probably should.

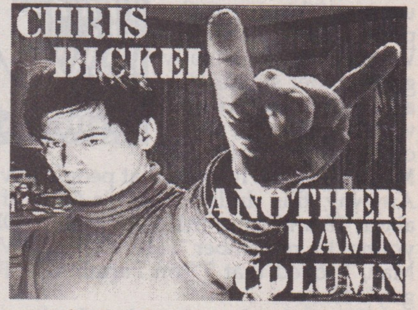
Over the past few months I've been pondering why New York City was attacked, I still have doubts to who the attackers were, considering it seems we would have invaded Afghanistan one way or another due to Dick Cheney's energy plan. But I've compiled a list of possibilities why one would choose New York and not someplace like Vegas or Orlando. Here is my list of possible suspects.

1. Someone who pissed his pants after spending an hour trying to find a public restroom or any restroom that will allow you to use it without buying a $2 cup of coffee which will then make you have to pee again. There are actually two of those self-cleaning things that I'm always afraid I'll get stuck in and bleached to death near the BART station in San Francisco. Since its possible that about five or six million people could be waiting in line at one of them I don't recommend you trying them out here.
2. Someone deciding to take the lower level on The George Washington Bridge and fell into that seven-foot pothole that is a native's favorite. Gives it to that guy who just cut me off from Jersey a big kick in the ass so he remembers to stay there.
3. Actually anyone who drives in downtown everyday would probably be a suspect. I know a delivery driver who finds reason to pull out his switchblade and go at cars that double park in front of him, sometimes he "writes his name and dot's the I's" on the guys tires as well.
4. Someone trying to find a parking spot the night they had the World Summit. Yeah I know I'm an idiot for driving downtown when there were 90 protests going on simultaneously, but the Sea Monkeys had a show. I did miss the show looking for a parking spot.
5. The woman at the information desk at Port Authority Bus Terminal. "What do you mean where do I collect my baggage! It's still sitting next to the bus dumbass!"
6. Anyone who went to NYC with the promise of great pizza and happened to go to Rays on the corner of St. Marks Pl.
7. Anyone who was told Mars Bar is a good place to hang out.
8. Anyone who got a ticket for peeing in an alley because they couldn't find a restroom, drinking in street because they can't afford bar drinks, squeegeeing their windows because some angry deliveryman dumped his lunch on it, or dancing at a club because dancing is illegal.
9. The guy who lives next to George Tabb and has to hear him talk about his dog all the time.

Anyhow I went to visit my cousin in Orange County, California last week, and all I can say is, I found a new love for New York. It's hard tō believe Americans live under such horribly boring conditions and pay through the nose for it. Oh, housing developments and chain stores what a life! The night I got there it rained and I stepped on 20 disgusting snails on the way up to his apartment. The worst think I've ever stepped in here was bum shit. I'd take bum shit over a snail anyway. I went to visit my friend Sarah in San Diego and with in her wisdom of insects and spiders she told me the snails were probably introduced. We looked it up and it figures that they are the result of 19 century Frenchmen who started up a pyramid scheme selling snail farms to disgruntled gold miners. I'm quite happy with where I live, there's always some good drama, the sewer cleaner guy across the street is always screaming at his wife and kids, throwing stuff out the window, I have a new landlord who is Albanian (if you remember some time back someone wrote a letter accusing me of being racist towards Albanians for some reason) well now I officially am, OK? They're building some sort of manufacturing facility in the basement and they cut my bike chain. Hey if that isn't enough to start World War I , I dunno what is.

So even though everyone has to pee and drive like they have to pee, NYC is still the best place to be, they can drop as many planes, trains, and double decker buses they want on us and I'm staying.

bill@candids.com



Part One: Punk Rock Show Promotion for Dummies

Having been involved with punk shows for longer than I care to remember, I've experienced the phenomenon from every angle. I've booked and promoted my fair share of gigs in both bars and basements. I've plunked down my greenbacks to attend countless hundreds of shows booked by both kids and "major promoters." I've also been in various bands playing everywhere from warehouses, to living room house-parties, to squats, to bar gigs, to full-on festivals. I speak from experience on what works and what doesn't.

I've seen show-promoters come and go. It's a tiring, thankless job. Rarely is everyone completely satisfied with the job done by the promoter. If the bands aren't pissed off about the order of the bill, then the kids are pissed off that it costs too much to get into the gig. Inevitably, some kid does something to destroy property at the show space, bringing the unwanted attention of the cops or the property owner. This usually means that the shows get shut down which leads to the kids talking about how "lame" so-and-so's shows are. Putting on shows is a grand-ole-headache and these headstrong hurdle-jumpers deserve a certain degree of respect for keeping their scenes thriving.

Few promoters last very long, as it's easy to get real burned-out real quick. This leaves a void in towns where you have tons

of kids that wanna see their favorite bands who are coming through on tour. The situation that inevitably arises is this void is filled by inexperienced promoters setting up shows that are doomed to fail. This results in everyone involved having a lousy time or someone getting majorly pissed off.

Much of this can be avoided.

The biggest mistake I see inexperienced promoters making is overbooking of shows. Everyone in the punk scene wants to be the nice guy. There's nothing wrong with being a nice guy, that is, until it fucks everything up for everybody else.

Here's an example. A young show promoter, let's call him Joe Schmoe, books his favorite crust band the BLOTZNIAKS from England who happen to be on a US tour. It turns out that another major US band, the FLIBBERTYGIBBERTIES (an extremely popular highwater-pants band from South Dakota) are also coming through the area at the same time. Joe decides that it would be great to put two big bands with different fanbases together on the same bill. Word begins to spread that Joe is bringing the BLOTZNIAKS and the FLIBBERTGIBBERTIES. Two local bands, the WONGYDONGITTYDONGS and WICKER RIOT really love the BLOTZNIAKS and decide that they want to be on the bill. Joe, thinking, "the more the merrier," adds the bands to the bill. Later on, the CHUBBERS hear that the FLIBBERTYGIBBERTIES are playing soon. They call Joe up. "Can we get on that show? Our bass player used to go to grade school with the drummer of the FLIBBERTYGIBBERTIES." "Sure," says Joe. "This is turning out great!" he thinks. "This is turning out to be like a mini-'fest'."

As the show date approaches, two more bands get added to the bill. Joe has reservations about adding the YOLLY YUMPERS (a ska band) and the GEEZERLY BUTLERS (a stoner-rock band) because this would be the first show ever for both bands. He figures it will be OK, because they'll bring their friends out and besides, he doesn't want to be a dick by telling these guys that they can't play.

The show date arrives. Joe has booked out a local club for the gig. A touring band called the ADDONZ shows up. It seems their show for that night got canceled. "Can we add on to your show?" they ask. "Sure," says Joe... again, not wanting to be a dick.

Joe didn't realize that the club was going to take a cut of the door for security and sound-guy. Even though the flyer said the show was $5, he figures he'll have to make the show at least $6 to get any money for the bands. The club informs him that if the show is $6, then underage kids will have to pay $7 (the club has a policy of charging a dollar extra for underage).

One thing Joe didn't count on was the fact that half of the kids in his town that normally go to shows are in the bands that are playing. All those kids get in free, as well as their "guest-list" friends. A few crusty kids balk at the $7 door price and simply hang out in the parking lot drinking 40's.

The show lasts until 3 in the morning because there are so many bands. Most of the kids leave around 1 am before the "headlining" bands even get to go on. the BLOTZNIAKS and the FLIBBERTYGIBBERTIES both play to a crowd of about six people.

Joe has to tell the YOLLY YUMPERS, the GEEZERLY BUTLERS, the WONGYDONGITTYDONGS, WICKER RIOT, and the CHUBBERS that there isn't enough money to pay the local bands. The WONGYDONGITTYDONGS, WICKER RIOT, and the CHUBBERS are all cool with it, but the YOLLY YUMPERS and the GEEZERLY BUTLERS get in Joe's face and tell him what a dick he is and that they'll kick his ass if they ever see him alone and away from his friends. The YOLLY YUMPERS and the GEEZERLY BUTLERS are young bands and don't realize that actually getting paid for playing a local show is an extreme rarity.

Joe uses the $40 that was raised at the door (after the club took their cut) to split between the BLOTZNIAKS and the FLIBBERTYGIBBERTIES. The bands get $20 each. The FLIBBERTYGIBBERTIES vow to never come to Joe's town again. The BLOTZNIAKS vow to never come to the US again shortly before they put a mic stand through the front window of the club.

The club now refuses to do any more punk shows because they made barely any money off the bar and they have a front window to replace and some kid smeared shit all over the bathroom floor while one of the bands was playing.

Bands: Does this scenario sound vaguely familiar? Yes, it may be slightly exaggerated, but most will agree that I'm not too far off the mark.

Promoters: These are simply my opinion (others may disagree with what I've laid out here), but I have some suggestions to would-be promoters that could be helpful.

1. Try not to book more than one major act on a bill. This is especially true if the band is driving a long distance. You're better off doing two separate shows (on separate nights of course) than making one big show. Many kids will attend both shows just to have something to do.

2. Try not to book more than three bands on a bill. This may seem outlandish to most punk show promoters because it's a rarity to ever see a punk show with less than four bands, however, the sad truth is that many people don't have much of an attention span past three bands. Also, unless some of the bands are playing for free, dividing money up between a bunch of bands means that no one gets sufficient gas money. I can't tell you how many times I've been on tour and found that the show we had booked had five extra bands added at the last minute. This means that we've gotta wait around an extra three hours to play and get considerably less gas money at the end of the night. Nothing pisses a touring band off more than discovering that their show has morphed into a marathon.

3. If at all possible, book shows at community centers or punkhouses instead of bars. Bar owners are usually bad news. If you have to work with a bar owner, make sure you know up front what percentage of the door is taken by the bar and if you will be required to pay for sound and security.

4. Don't have a show that costs more than $5 to get into. Maybe you can blame FUGAZI for this, but no one wants to pay more than $5 for a punk show. It somehow seems "unpunk" to pay $6 to get into a show. If you find yourself having to charge more than $5, you must be doing a "fest.".. and for God's sake, aren't there *enough* of those already?

5. Don't be afraid to say no to bands that want a show. *Especially* if you've *never heard of them.* If you haven't heard of them, then chances are no one else in your town has. I know this seems extremely unfair to bands that are just starting out, but adding bands onto a bill means that there's more cash that will have to be made in order to pay the other bands decent gas money. If the band you are adding isn't going to draw more people to the show, then you are cheating everyone else involved.

6. Many promoters think that the touring band should always play last. "Headlining" is for stadium concerts. If you've somehow managed to book five bands onto your show, ask the "most important" band where they'd like to play in the set. Most touring bands don't want to play last if that means that they go onstage at 3 am. Make all those local bands you booked play *after* your touring band if the show looks like it's going to go on late. This is *especially important* if you are doing a house show. Cops are more likely to shut a show down if it's going on well into the night. Get the touring bands on and out of the way if there's *any* chance that cops might show up.

Bands: This is particularly directed at young bands just starting out. It's a *punk* show. There is no reason for you to play for an *hour*. There's no reason for punk bands to ever play more than 45 minutes. There are some rare exceptions, but particularly if you are not the touring band that everyone came to see, you should keep your set limited to a half-hour. Some bigger bands can get away with playing for an hour if the mood is right and the crowd is getting off, but generally 45 minutes is a good length. The local bands on the bill shouldn't go over half an hour unless it's a situation where most of the kids came out only to see the local band. If you've been a band for less than a year, chances are that *no one wants to see your ass play for more than 30 minutes.* I know you've got 20 great songs that you want to show off. Play your ten best songs and leave the audience wanting more instead of having them say "when will this torture ever end?"

Part Two: I'm Not a Libertarian

I received this email after my last MRR column in which I discussed the interaction of the "war on drugs" with the "war on terrorism":

Dear Sir:

In a recent letter, I saw your comment about the Libertarian Party. Specifically, you said, "Of course, anything said by the Libertarians

should be taken with a grain of salt." While I realize that you meant no disrespect or offense by this comment, it shines a dark light on our integrity. I'm sure I do not need to point out the many failings of our Democratic and Republican leaders over the years. The Libertarian Party has stood tall for many of these years, and are now perceived as the largest third party that America has ever had. We do not speak lies, sir. In fact, we place great importance on honesty. You may rest assured that everything we say is absolutely true.

Now, taking something the Libertarian Party says "with a grain of salt" is not the same thing as insinuating that they are liars; however, I don't happen to think that the Libertarian Party is always the most credible source for information or for ideology. There are many platforms on which I agree with the Libertarians, but the Libertarian party line is one that I cannot and will not tow.

When I first started college, the Libertarians were campaigning heavily on campus. Their party looked pretty good to me. They were in favor of legalizing drugs. They were opposed to any legislation which was related to "victimless crime." They were against government intervention into the lives of individuals. Basically, they presented themselves to the young liberals of my campus as being the closest thing you could get to being an anarchist while still being a member of a "legitimate" political party.

It wasn't until I worked for a Libertarian business owner that I began to fully understand. Libertarians want the government to quit meddling in their affairs. I began to see what this meant to a Libertarian businessman. A Libertarian doesn't want the government telling him how much he has to pay his employees. Minimum wage laws are anathema to the Libertarian. Having worked much of my life as a minimum wage-slave, I sort of appreciate those laws being on the books. The Libertarian doesn't. The Libertarian would like to pay his employees as little as he sees fit to get away with.

The Libertarian business owner also resents the government telling him how safely he has to run his business. He resents being told by government where he can dump his toxic waste and how much of it he's allowed to dump. He resents being told who he cannot discriminate against.

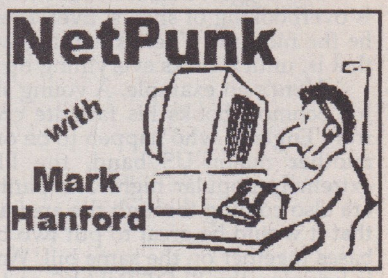
Basically, the more I looked at the Libertarian agenda from a businessman's point of view, the more happy I was that we have a certain degree of government involvement. When you live in a capitalist society, the big-money corporations wield an insane amount of power. The government is the only thing standing in between the corporations and the complete decimation of the planet (not to mention the total exploitation of the working class). Far be it for me to think the government in the US is doing a good job, but ya know, I appreciate the fact that there is some control over what big business can and can't do. I appreciate the fact that I'm not going to be forced to work a job in a sweat shop for $1.50 an hour. I appreciate the fact that the waste produced by factories is subject to government scrutiny. I appreciate the fact that companies are not allowed to discriminate in their hiring practices. The government may not always do the best job of keeping the corporations in check, but there is clearly some degree of control being exercised. The Libertarians ideally would have no governmental interference in the matters of business. That scares the hell out of me.

It bothers me that the Libertarians aggressively market their party to young liberals. They've roped in so many anarcho-stoners and hippy burnouts with their promises of decriminalization of drugs. Fuck. Who wants to smoke pot when it's contaminated with toxic waste from the upstream pesticide factory?

I have several other more specific problems with the Libertarian agenda, which I won't waste everyone's time by addressing here. Let's just say that the big money behind the Libertarian party is going to have a big money agenda. That should be an easy one to figure out. As far as Libertarian theory is concerned, let me say this: the only way total freedom is ever going to work is when people stop being greedy and when people stop being domineering and when people stop being assholes. When this happens, and when capitalism is entirely dismantled, get back to me... I've got some wonderful anarchist theory that just may work for this grand new civilization. Until that happens, we'll live with what we've got while trying to chip away at the bullshit of a highly flawed system that just so happens to exist in the real world. That just so happens to be the place I gotta live in.

Part Three: Contact

Anyone needing to reach me can get me at: smashismo@aol.com or PO Box 50454 // Columbia, SC // 29250



By the time you read this, it may be too late. Congress may have taken away your right to own devices that will allow you to make copies of music and other media for use in mp3 players, CD-burners, etc. Public comments on the issue ended April 8th (which is a few days later than the time I'm writing this).

Yep, once again the powers-that-be have their head up their asses... or rather, corporate interests have their fists up the asses of Congress and are waving them around like puppets. To find out what you can do at this point, check out the Electronic Frontier Foundation's Campaign for AudioVisual Free Expression (CAFÉ) at http://www.eff.org/café/ . The CAFÉ includes information about more than just the issue of copying music, so take the time to visit.

I have a bunch of different sites for you this month, starting off with a brand new DIY resource, PunkPortal.info. PunkPortal is a site that consists of message boards and news archives created by *you*, after you register for a free account. PunkPortal is actually part of *Caustic Truths* magazine, and it looks like it could be a pretty cool site if enough people actually visit it. Now if I could just get *Caustic Truths* to stop sending me their damn press releases.

I'm not sure why it took me two years to discover that Finnish hardcore legends Riistetyt have a website, but it did. Now, however, I'm telling you about it, which means that you should head over and check out what these guys have been up to lately. They have a bunch of Real Media files available for your listening pleasure, including old stuff from '83 and brand new stuff recorded this year. Proof that even old farts can still tear it up. Where to find them? - http://www.riistetyt.com/ .

A slightly different genre, but still a blast from the past, UK 70s punk rockers Penetration reformed last year, and have an excellent website full of both new and old photos, video, mp3s, and news. This is a band not enough punks know about, but you'll quickly learn a lot from this site. The only bummer is that downloading from the archives is extremely slow, even on a fast connection, so you have to be patient. Anyway, take a look at http://www.loversofoutrage.co.uk/ .

Speaking of UK bands, you'll find a slew of Oi!-ish (I made that up) bands from the 80s at UK82. Bands here include Abrasive Wheels, The Adicts, Anti-Pasti, Chron Gen, One Way System, Varukers, Vice Squad, and more. Each band section includes some lyrics, photos, a discography, and links to other sites about the band. Dig it - http://www.uk82.com/ .

Staying in England, One Car Pile-up have a decent website, with a few mp3s of the melodic hardcore, as well as a tour diary, a few photos, and some silly stuff. If these guys are as dorky as their web page makes you think they are, they are probably a lot of fun. Be the first on your block to give them a listen - http://www.onecarpileup.com/ .

Not a lot to read at Punko Drom (http://www.punkodrom.com) unless you happen to know Cyrillic, because this website is entirely in Russian. Not really that much to look at either, but the primary reason I'm mentioning it is because there is a pretty nice collection of links to Russian punk bands you've probably never heard of. Just click on the leftmost mohawk punker at the top of the page.

For a site that does have a lot to read, check out *Mixtape* webzine, which is updated every Wednesday. The webmaster has a rant every week, plus there are columns, letters, vid clips, reviews, and an archive section that includes interviews with 7 Seconds, Brian Baker, and bunches more. *Mixtape* is online at http://www.mixtapewebzine.com/ .

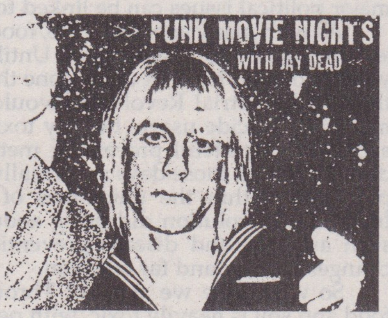
An addition to last month's blurb on record collecting sites would have to be Chris's Punk Record Collecting Page at http://pages.cthome.net/chrisrenna/ . In addition to a big trade list, Chris also has a cool picture sleeve gallery, his list of the 201 most essential punk/wave records, and some interesting taste in non-punk music. Give it a look.

Wow! That was my reaction to Crispin Sartwell's website at http://www.crispinsartwell.com/ . Crispin is a college professor, writer, punk rock aficionado, and has opinions/knowledge/information on anarchism, atheism, books, rocknroll, video, esthetics, and everything else. Make sure to check out his essays on punk in the All Edges section. Definitely an academic, Crispin gives you tons to read and think about at his website. I'll be visiting it often.

I'm going to finish it up this month with a couple of places where you can spend your cash. First up is Pure Mania. They carry patches, t-shirts, and bum flaps. While this is at a UK site, their prices are all in dollars and they seem to be based in the US. Their prices aren't too bad, so check them out at http://web.ukonline.co.uk/puremania/.

The other place for you to drop some moolah is Machete Mfg. They have t-shirts, posters, buttons and stickers, all of punk bands. Prices are decent, and there was some good stuff in the clearance section when I was there. You can find Machete Mfg at http://www.machetemfg.com/ .

OK, that does it, I'm outta here for this month. You can e-mail me at netpunk@diehippiedie.com or check out my past, present, and future columns online in the Netpunk section at http://www.diehippiedie.com/ . Later.



Hello, and welcome to another month of Punk Movie Nights. Yes, right here in the soon-to-be-yellowing pages of your beloved rag, the degradation of cinema continues right down to the level of a philosophical rant by a scabby armed, snot rag in the back pocket, sunburnt face in the middle of the winter, street poet/drummer/guy who has lived in San Francisco for twenty years and doesn't know where the bus stop is. It is with great pleasure that we begin this month's installment of Punk Movie Nights with a few more selections from the Collector's Realm 3 in Berkeley, shot entirely using digital video by their resident auteur: Anarchy Al.

VULGAR PIGEONS • *Live at Gilman*

Initially I wasn't too stoked about viewing this video because I am personally dismayed by the transformation that has taken place with this particular band. I once believed that VP would go down as one of the better bands, especially from a live performance standpoint, to ever emerge from the West Bay (San Francisco side of the Bay Area). So much of the basis for my opinion had to do with their original lead singer Spencer, who at first glance would appear to be completely wrong for a band like the VULGAR PIGEONS, and yet it turned out that he was just what that band needed to stand out from the rest of West Bay's newest emerging grind bands. For whatever reason, this relationship didn't last, and Spencer has been replaced by a new lead singer, and some newer members for what looks to be an attempt by VP to build themselves into a darker, heavier, more serious band than they were previously. So far, no good, but maybe with some time. It was with this kind of apprehension with which I sat down to view Anarchy Al's video, which was shot at Gilman from somewhere high up in the rafters.

I have to say, that this video is a lot of fun, and in spite of some technical difficulties on the part of the Gilman sound crew (or it could have been VP), this video took away all of those negative feelings I was having about it just moments before pushing play. The reason? Surprise, this is an old VP Performance, featuring the original line-up and even though it's as solid as you might expect, it only hints at how good this band eventually became a few shows after the fact. This set was filmed during YELLOW MACHINE GUN's (all female grind unit from Japan) West Coast tour, of which Anarchy Al also has footage of (a couple of different shows). Sound quality and picture quality on this one are top notch. Last I checked, Al had most of his tapes on sale for $5, but if you are mailordering, then you should definitely contact Al before hand.

(CR3, 2566 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley, CA, 510-540-1182)

PITCH BLACK • *Live at the Tempest*

I was never that impressed with this band, and I'm sure they could care less about my opinion since they went from "former members of SCREW 32" to a headlining band based on their own merits faster than George Bush can send your loved ones away to die in a war that will yield nothing but death and more enemies to be feared in the years to come, but that is bedside the point. PITCH BLACK has become known for their pyrotechnics almost as much as they have for their music, which is melodic hardcore with a faster, more intense approach to the rhythm section (someone once compared this band to TSOL, but it wouldn't be the TSOL you are probably most familiar with). This particular show was shot at the Tempest in San Francisco, and it is a very intimate setting that provides for good picture quality, as well as decent sound quality in terms of a video shoot. The set is tight and workmanlike, which is OK, but a little bit of unpredictability isn't all that bad either. That written, PITCH BLACK is definitely one of those bands on the way up, and so if you want to get some quality early footage of them in a club they may soon be too big to play, then here ya go. On the other hand, I wonder what other shows Al might have missed in order to shoot this one? If you know what I'm talking about, even though I don't, and you live near the Collector's Realm then make sure you get a hold of Al the next time DS-13 or TRAGEDY comes to town. Usually when told about how cool something is, Al will at least show up to check it out. He has two excellent videos of WOLFPACK that he shot a couple of years ago to prove it.

(CR3, 2566 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley, CA, 510-540-1182)

EVERYTHING MUST GO • *Live at the Stork Club*

Here is a band that is very popular in the San Francisco Bay Area bar scene, especially for those folks who never got over their intense love for '77 style punk rock. No, not that shit they try to pass off as '77 punk rock over at the mall where people like you spend most of their time, but the good stuff like the DEAD BOYS! EVERYTHING MUST GO has a lot of the same ingredients the DEAD BOYS had, like a charismatic lead singer who is probably more trouble than he's worth, and more liquored than a heartbroken Janis Joplin on a rainy St. Patrick's Day, or just Shane McGowan. Or whatever the fuck you equate it to, but anyway, this band has got the three chord (one chord more than I'll ever need by the way), rocknroll thing down to a scary science. Unlike the DEAD BOYS, this band has appeared on the scene long after those types of bands truly had an influence and relevance that the DEAD BOYS had, but historical rehashing gets boring fast, so on to the video.

It's too bad this was filmed at a place called the Stork Club in Oakland, which is one of the worst places to either play or watch a show in the Bay Area, or for that matter in California. The picture quality and sound here is good, as usual, but their is a serious lack of energy on this tape, which is mostly a result of there appearing to be no audience at this particular show, which may or may not have been the case. So when the lead singer throws a bottle, or kicks over a table, or blows snot all over his leather pants, so much of the power of those moments might have held is pretty much lost. The only time you realize that there is in fact a living, breathing audience, and that they are really digging EVERYTHING MUST GO is when at the end of the set you can hear voices off camera screaming for an encore. Still I'd definitely recommend this for all of you garage rock record collecting nerds who love the DEAD BOYS, but have never done speed or hard drugs in your life and so you still believe that this shit is at the vanguard of the underground music scene. Lester Bangs is rolling in his grave, you motherfuckers.

(CR3, 2566 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley, CA, 510-540-1182)

DANCING OUTLAW • *Special Director's Cut*

This film was suggested for viewing at Punk Movie Nights by a guy by the name of Brett. Brett owns a little video shop over in the Mission District of San Francisco called LEATHER

TONGUE. LEATHER TONGUE specializes in independent release, and cult films for the most part, but he also sells underground zines, records, and t-shirts. His store is also covered in flyers for local upcoming events, and if all that doesn't sound cool enough, then consider that his backyard is also the hangout for SF's main Dis-core band BLOWN TO BITS. Brett's recommendation this month is entitled the *DANCING OUTLAW*. *DANCING OUTLAW* is a documentary about a mountain man who is the son of an obscure yet legendary tap dancer, not to mention a multiple personality that spends a third of his time as Elvis, a third of his time as the "Devil," and a third of his time as himself—a mostly friendly guy by the name of Jesse. Jesse is a redneck who lives in a trailer on the one hand, and an obviously talented musician and dancer who is clearly out of place in his current environment on the other. Sanity is quickly slipping away as Jesse finds himself more and more trapped life in his little mountain town. His movie star good looks also betray his surroundings, and the contrast between a crooning, dressed up Jesse and the story of his family and especially his father seem both tragic, yet predictable at the same time. You could in all likelihood have shot an entire documentary just on Jesse's mother, but then the humor and frightening moments of sociopathic behavior would be diminished, and those are after all why I'd most recommend this film. The bonus footage highlighting Jesse's dancing did nothing to enhance the original version, and so I'd reckon that if you came across an original version without the bonus feature, then you'd be just fine. This is a three thumbs up film!

(Contact Brett and Leather Tongue for more contact info: 415-552-2900; www.leathertongue.com)

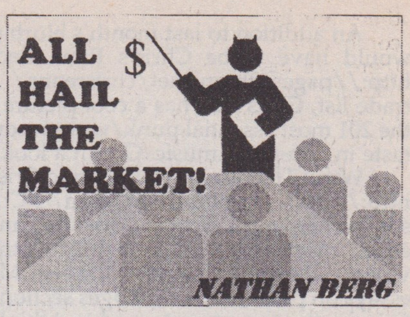
Gilman Short Film Fest

So here is a quick report about the Short Film Fest at Gilman that I've been writing about in recent columns. Fest number one happened, and even though I was skeptical about how it would turn out, and about how many people would show up, the entire night flew by, and there were more than enough punks in attendance to warrant doing another one very soon. This trial run at a short film fest featured some WTO protest footage from Seattle, animation, short video features by local high school kids, Nick Zedd films, and *Green Pubes*! Awesome. Another cool thing about the evening was that admission was free with your Gilman membership card, and the club provided complimentary food! Not a bunch of shit either, but good food like hummus, pita bread, oranges, organic tomatoes, salsa and chips, and some other goodies. There was so much that you could even have seconds if you wanted, and of course coffee is always a quarter for all you can drink at Gilman. Cheers to Tyler and the Crimson Baboon for pulling the first one off so well, and to the Gilman volunteers for supporting their idea. It is one of the coolest things to imagine that a non-music event like this could become a part of the regular Gilman schedule somehow, and cooler still to know that punks, especially younger ones are being exposed to truly alternative filmmaking and more importantly a punk environment that is supportive of creativity.

Maximumrocknroll 20th Anniversary Weekend

I guess last on this month's agenda for Punk Movie Nights is to say congratulations to *MRR* for being around, and sticking to its guns for the past twenty years. I just got back from the second of the two shows held at Gilman to commemorate that milestone (the one that featured killer bands like the PHANTOM LIMBS, WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?, and of course NINE SHOCKS TERROR) and I am really impressed at how this magazine's existence has influenced so many people's lives, in a positive way, and that it still seems more cutting and underground than newer magazines, especially those that claim to be the new *MRR*. Personally, I've seen eight different coordinators in my time here, and while it's been shaky at times since Tim Yo's passing, I feel as if the magazine is stronger and more on point now than it has ever has been since I signed on as a shitworker back in...whatever year that was...way back when. It was also cool to celebrate *MRR*'s longevity at Gilman, which just celebrated its 15th anniversary, and it would be cool to keep it all going another twenty years. Right?

If you have something that you want included in this column, then send it to: Jay, PMB 419, 1442A Walnut St., Berkeley, CA 94709.



Respecting Your Dinner

Although I rarely talk about it in my columns, I am a chef by trade, and I talk about little else in my day-to-day life. Of course, I do talk about food a lot in my columns, especially when discussing all of the fine, upstanding things that Corporate America is doing for our food systems, but I've never really given you my perspectives on food as a chef. I have recently fallen into one of the most exciting and interesting positions that a chef could hope to get into (which I'll talk about later), and subjects of food have even more commonplace than usual of late for me. So this column will just be a compilation of some of my thoughts on food.

Because of the fact that everyone this planet must eat to survive, I feel that food-related issues (and their varied numerous aspects) comprise the most important part of all political/cultural/economical issues. Many leftist/anarchist types would disagree with that belief, claiming that issues of labor, power, and identity politics are more immediate and important. Some scoff at discussions of vegetarianism/veganism, organic principles and agricultural economics, choosing instead to garner more attention to police brutality or foreign policy. I think you all know me well enough to know that I don't find any of those issues unimportant by any standard, but I think of food issues on a higher level, mostly because I have found that nearly all major political issues can be linked to food at some level.

As with many aspects of life, food was a much simpler subject in the not so distant past. Until only about one hundred years ago, food had not undergone the massive transformations that the Industrial Revolution would bestow upon it, such as massive pesticide usage, heavily toxic transportation methods, excessively wasteful processing methods. The term "organic" didn't apply in those days as virtually everything was grown or produced within the guidelines of the natural system. The Industrial Revolution did bring about a few positive changes, such as virus and disease prevention, but all other positive changes are few and far between.

So where are we at now? Throughout the world, today's food and soil is heavily toxic, with pesticides and other harmful industrial chemicals being used at an absolutely devastating rate. (As with much of globalization, it's the already impoverished countries and regions that are suffering the worst.) Food is under rapid transport as well, with much of the world's edibles being shipped halfway around the world before it enters a mouth (and requiring yet more devastating alterations in order to keep the appearance of freshness [and trust me, appearance is all you get in those terms]). Working at a massive grocery store in northern Wisconsin during my high school years, I was absolutely mystified that two of the stores' best-selling items were coffee and bananas, crops that couldn't possibly be more out of step with the local agriculture. And, of course, the whole meaning of the term "food" had to be expanded to incorporate what passes for food these days. "Fast food" has been shoved down much of the world's throat, and even the majority of "fancy" restaurants do little more than open up cans of food and heat them up. And grocery stores are stocked to the hilt with prepackaged products, instilling the need to use excessive amounts of plastic, cardboard and Styrofoam. The raw food in these boxes and "microwaveable containers" has been dehydrated, chemically and genetically altered, doused with unnecessary preservatives and artificial flavors and colors. To any person who appreciates the environment, culture, community, or hell, even just good food, it's a horrifying spectacle. What's happening with our food systems today is no less than "the rape of food." This phrase is not used lightly either. Our modern food systems show no respect for how food is grown, harvested, processed and consumed, and even less respect is paid to who benefits and who suffers.

Any politically-active mind reading this column has no doubt witnessed all of these things on their own and is probably well-versed on the terrors of our modern food systems. And

there are literally thousands of methods that can be used to combat all of these semi-recent changes to our food systems and there are also thousands of activists working their asses off (directly or indirectly food-related) to help bring these changes to light. However, as I so often do in this column, I'd like to focus on positives changes that individuals can work towards on a personal basis in their own lives (read: I'm a preachy bastard). As consumers, we do have a massive capability to change things for the better and I think this often goes unrecognized.

When I use the term "consumers," I am usually referring to the economic definition (as in "producers and consumers"), referring to the ability to change things depending on how and where you choose to spend your money. But when applied to all other subjects, one can bring about those changes by not being consumer if they so choose. For example, if one has a supreme hatred towards computers, they can make their statement by not using or purchasing a computer, thereby removing themselves from the label of "computer consumer" (but by no means removing themselves from the negative aspects of modern technology). However, with food, we are all consumers because we all eat. You could probably try and remove yourself from the label of "food consumer" if you wanted, but you'd probably be removing yourself from much more than just a label. So we are all consumers when it comes to food, whether it involves money or not, because that's what food is for: consumption. So when I speak of making personal changes to affect modern food systems as a consumer, I am basically referring to your diet.

As punk rockers and politically active folk, most of our discussions of personal diet end up as discussions of vegetarianism and veganism vs. meat-eating. However, there is so much else worth discussing that it's almost a shame we spend so much time talking about it. What I would like to see is a greater discussion about the merits of a different type of diet limitation, and that's eating locally.

The concept of local eating is quite simple and again, there was a time not so long ago where it was the only way one could eat, no two ways about it. Basically, it means that you focus on primarily eating food that is grown in your surrounding region. By this definition alone, there are many benefits to eating locally, including the support of local economies (thereby community) and the assurance of fresh food, eaten during the season in which it's meant to be grown. On the opposite side of that coin, you're also not supporting massive pollution by requiring that your food be shipped halfway around the world before you eat it or supporting the "middlemen" who are actually the ones who reap the majority of the profits in our modern food systems. But simply eating food that's grown (or raised) near you doesn't necessarily make everything better. There's the major question of how the land where your food comes from is treated. I am a firm believer in the concept of organics (food grown without the use of herbicides and pesticides) as many food activists are, but there are some things that aren't often recognized in relation to organics. First of all, just because a certain farm is organic doesn't automatically mean that they treat the land (or animals, or workers) any better. How many chickens are locked in tiny little cages for the entirety of their lives, but fed a steady diet of "certified organic" grains? How many organic farms perform mono-cropping or any other of a host of bad agricultural practices that leave the land in nearly as bad of shape as if it was being treated with DDT? One must not forget that there are differing levels of both organic and non-organic food. Who's to say that the small-scale apple orchard ten miles out of town that uses very low 'inputs' (read: chemical applications) is any worse than the massive organic operation that boxes and ships its food to anywhere but it's own backyard? One must not also forget that new federal standards for the term "organic" are going into effect over the next few years. The new changes are definitely not as stringent as past definitions of "organic," (although it will be nice to have a national standard for a change) and, perhaps even more so than in the recent past, the smallest-scale farmers, some of whom are the gentlest upon the land on which the grow, will not be able to afford the effort or money that producers must go through to become "certified organic."

And what about this vegetarian/vegan thing? As many of you might know, I am a vegetarian and have been so for the past eight years or so. However, I have found that my thoughts on the subject often differ from that of other veggies. First of all, I have no problem whatsoever with people eating meat. I'm not going to use any of the typical mindless arguments (i.e. "The human body was designed for eating meat!" or "If everyone became a vegetarian, there'd be way too many cows!")(yes, I've heard them both and much dumber), but I truly don't have any problem with the idea of eating animals. However, the kind of meat-eating that I don't have a problem with is either where a meat-eater is assured that the animal they are consuming was humanely treated over the course of its life or that they kill it themselves. Needless to say, neither of those traits hold true for a good 99% of all meat on the market, in restaurants or grocery stores. People these days buy their meat in neat little plastic-wrapped sections where no trace whatsoever of the hell that they lived in can be seen. Eating meat raised in the above fashion is quite simply terrible, no matter which way you look at it. It's quite detrimental for the environment and unbelievably cruel to the animals. Although I don't get down on anyone for it in my everyday life (I save it for these columns…), I truly wish that the meat-eating population would change in two primary ways: 1) I wish that people would only eat animals that were actually respected during their lifetime (allowed to roam, not hoarded onto a small amount of land with thousands of others, not pumped full of every hormone imaginable, etc.) or animals that they feel comfortable killing themselves and 2) that people would treat eating animals as a luxury and not a staple of their diets. How many times in my life have I heard the phrase, "Man, if my plate doesn't have meat, it ain't a meal?"

On the opposite end, I assumed for a few years that it was just a matter of time before I became vegan. (One of the side benefits of being a vegan in Wisconsin is that you can safely plead "insanity" to any crime out there and get away with it.) However, as my thoughts on food have developed, particularly in regards to local, seasonal eating, I have come to the conclusion that I can never be a vegan. First of all, let's be honest and admit that every single pseudo-meat/dairy product in existence sucks. They look and taste like plastic and, after looking at the ingredients of most of them, I would much prefer stuffing my face with a large handful of cow ass. I know I shouldn't be making such a big deal of it, but it's true that most vegans I know eat like crap. But beyond that, I've come to understand that it's much better for the planet (and probably my karma) to drink milk that comes from a cooperative of dairy farmers within an hour of my home than it is to drink Rice Dream (of which, the main ingredient is grown on the other side of the planet, then mass-produced in a huge factory in California, before being shipped around the country in amazingly wasteful packaging) (*Imagine* a gallon-sized container…that's what I say.) However, I do still hold the same standards to dairy consumers that they should try to limit themselves to dairy that's produced in an animal-and-environmentally friendly manner.

So, how can one go about starting to focus their diet in on local, seasonal, organic food? The simplest thing one can do is to start shopping at your local farmer's market. The farmer's market represents everything that good punk rock should stand for: supporting a local and independent economy, cutting out the corporate scumbags, treating the environment with respect, meeting the people who produce what you're consuming and getting goods for cheap). Don't have a farmer's market in your town? Well, then its somewhat likely that there is a CSA somewhere nearby that you could join. Basically, a CSA (Community-Supported Agriculture) is a system where you pay a lump sum to a (typically organic) farmer at the beginning of the growing season (when they need the money most) and then you get a huge box of fresh produce every week throughout the season. CSAs are now all over the country, so it shouldn't be hard to find one in your area. It also can't hurt to ask the people at your local grocery store (or co-op or health food store if you have one) to label/promote everything in their store that's grown/raised/produced locally. Better yet, if you have the time/space, start your own garden and taste the pleasures of eating the fruits (and vegetables) of your own labor (with nature's help). By doing research on your own, you'll find that there are tons of different ways of supporting local agriculture, and when you do, you'll find that you've never tasted food so good.

Our current food systems are in a huge state of decay, but a

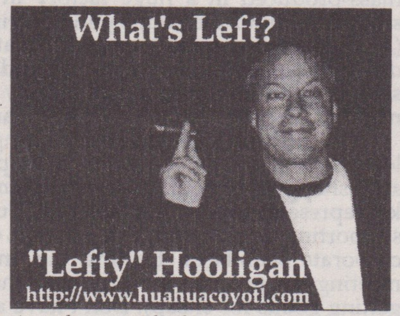
revolt against the global capitalist method is starting to build. All over the world, people are beginning to understand what it means to respect their dinners and treat food as one of the most important aspects of life, which it truly should be.

As I was saying...

...I've got a new job. I've had the fortune of ending up with a position at the Michael Fields Agricultural Institute here in beautiful East Troy, WI. Basically, the institute is both a research facility and school for environmentally and fiscally beneficial agriculture. The staff does a wide variety of research and partnership development to foster a local food system where the land, the taste and both the farmer and consumer's pocketbook improves. The school provides hands-on training to a small number of agriculture students every growing season where they learn to run twelve acres worth of organic/biodynamic gardens, a fairly large CSA, as well as getting cooperative training in small-scale dairy operations, beekeeping, orchard growing, etc. What part do I get to play? I am the chef for the staff and students, cooking primarily with ingredients grown in the raised-bed gardens right outside my kitchen window or procured from farms right down the road. Furthermore, they are providing me with the opportunity to visit a number of different organic farms around the state as well as getting a first-hand look at other food production around Wisconsin, like wild rice harvesting, cheese and wine making, and maple syrup harvesting. As if that weren't enough, I also get the opportunity to work with different chefs in the region that place special focus on local, seasonal ingredients.

The reason I bring this up is not just to gloat (although that does play a minor part). Here at the institute, I have a massive amount of information at my disposal regarding food and agriculture. This means two things: 1) my columns over the course of the next eight months might lean a bit towards the subject of food and positive ways to change our currently unhealthy food systems and 2) any questions that you might have about regional diet, organic/biodynamic farmers (or CSAs) in your area, or anything along those lines, I can probably dig up some good answers for ya. Never knowing when to quit, I'm still the zinemeister at the radical bookstore in Madison too, so you can send all correspondence (including a sample of your newest zine if you'd like us to carry it) to:

Rainbow Bookstore Cooperative c/o Nathan Berg, 426 W. Gilman St. Madison, WI 53703.



On January 22, 2001, Converse Inc. filed for bankruptcy protection and announced that its shoes would soon be manufactured overseas. On April 15, 2001, less than four months later, Joey Ramone, arguably the person who single-handedly resurrected black high-top Chuck Taylor All-Star sneakers from oblivion by directly associating them with the primal energy of punk rock and roll, died of lymphatic cancer. Coincidence? I think not. Joey didn't die of a broken heart because Chuck's are no longer "Made in the USA," but instead are produced in Red China. It's far more sinister than that. And let's not even get into the "coincidence" of Joey Ramone and Tim Yohannan both dying of lymphoma.

I have fifty pairs of brand-new US-made black high top Chuck's in their original boxes safely stashed away. Since I wear a pair until they're riddled with holes, these should last me a lifetime. No bloodstained foreign Converse for me...

...Whoa! Have I finally gone over the edge into conspiracy theory and Converse survivalism? Actually, I do have a brand new pair of US manufactured Chuck's tucked away, but I also have no problem buying or wearing those new commie sneakers. As for a conspiracy around Joey and Tim's deaths, well, I hoped that would get your attention. This column's about conspiracy theory, and what's wrong with it.

Those of us on the political fringes of American society have been bombarded by conspiracy theories since 9/11. It was the Israeli Mossad that destroyed the World Trade Center since, supposedly, no Jews showed up for work at the WTC on September 11. No, it was the US government that instigated the WTC devastation so that it could go to war with Afghanistan and secure the route for an oil pipeline to carry Caspian crude. Flight 93 wasn't brought down by passengers and crew fighting the hijackers, but by US military jets shooting down the airplane. Osama bin Laden and Junior Bush are in cahoots because their daddies and granddaddies worked together in the oil and construction businesses. Etcetera, etcetera, *ad nauseum*.

It seems every day brings a new conspiracy theory, and the bullshit is now so deep that anyone interested in the facts, let alone the truth, would be advised to wear wading boots. That's one problem with conspiracy theories; they muddy the water and obscure what really happened. But I'm getting ahead of myself. A simple definition of conspiracy theory should bring us to a reasonable starting point.

To conspire, of course, literally means "to breath together" from the Latin. To conspire has come to mean to join in a secret plot or plan to accomplish some aim, whether legal or illegal. A conspiracy then is the act of conspiring together. Implied in this is that the parties conspiring together, if not fully independent, are at least autonomous. On this basis then, there is a distinction between covert action and conspiracy. Consider a situation where the CIA carries out a covert operation to assassinate, say, Osama bin Laden. The director of the CIA might conspire with the President, Joint Chiefs of Staff and others in the initiation and planning of the operation, or he might act alone to order the assassination. In either case, the operatives who carry out the action do not conspire even if they participate in the operational planning. They are simply doing what they're being paid to do. In turn conspiracy theory, aside from acknowledging that conspiracies do happen and that they can have profound effects on history (which I don't dispute), also asserts that conspiracies happen frequently, are the rule rather than the exception, and perhaps constitute history's driving force (which I do dispute).

Now, flash back thirty-two years.

I'm graduating from Buena High School in Ventura in the spring of 1970 when I attend a talk at Ventura Junior College on the JFK assassination given by someone who calls himself Dusty Roads. I'm well acquainted with right-wing conspiracy nuts who blather on about the international Communist conspiracy or the international Jewish conspiracy or the international banking conspiracy, but Dusty is my first left wing conspiracy theorist. He gives a devastating presentation; showing the Zupruder film, ridiculing the "super bullet," tearing apart the Warren Commission Report, mapping out the grassy knoll shooting gallery scenario, discussing his work with New Orleans district attorney Jim Garrison, and concluding that the CIA knocked off John F. Kennedy as payback for the botched Bay of Pigs operation and the Agency's subsequent forced reorganization. I come away from the talk shaken, and not a little paranoid.

Fast-forward five years.

I'm living in Santa Cruz in 1975, having graduated from UC Santa Cruz after transferring from Ventura Junior College. I listen to a radio program hosted by mega-conspiracy theorist Mae Brussel on a "listener supported" public station broadcasting from Monterey. The JFK assassination conspiracy theory is still going strong, but it has substantially mutated and morphed in the intervening five years. For one thing, the "who done it" part has multiplied, so folks calling into Mae Brussel's show are debating whether it was the CIA or the Mafia or crypto-Nazis or Cuban exiles or Castro's Cubans or the Soviet KGB or some combination of these players who killed Kennedy. Brussel's co-host is none other than Paul Krassner, co-founder of the Yippies and left-wing zany who publishes a scandalous humor magazine called *The Realist*. As Paul gets deeper and deeper into Mae Brussel's convoluted, often arcane, and ever expanding web of conspiracy theories, his off-the-wall sense of humor wanes until it is finally extinguished altogether. By the time I finally stop listening to the show, Krassner is dead serious not to mention deadly boring, and the whole subject of conspiracy theory has taken on a lunatic tinge in my mind.

I fully believe that Lee Harvey Oswald did not act alone, but I also realize I'll probably never know who really killed Kennedy.

Paul Krassner has since distanced himself from Mae Brussel, gained some perspective on the plethora of conspiracies he once so vehemently spouted, and recovered his excellent sense of humor. He even restarted *The Realist*, suspended during his dark days as a conspiracy theorist. Loss of humor and perspective are also negative consequences of conspiracy theory, though admittedly rather minor ones.

In *Gravity's Rainbow*, Thomas Pynchon played with the duality of paranoia/anti-paranoia. According to Pynchon, paranoia is that state of mind in which everything is seen as connected, while anti-paranoia is its opposite, in which nothing is perceived as connected to anything else. Anti-paranoia is anathema to human thinking, which exhibits a tendency to find meaning and make connections. This means that all types of thinking that attempt to explain "the big picture" (religion, philosophy, ethical or moral systems, political ideology, even science) are, by definition, forms of paranoia. Implied in this is that the universe is basically anti-paranoid, chaotic and random, with paranoid systems of human thought imposed upon it.

Conspiracy theory is thus paranoia to the nth degree.

People have a hard enough time distinguishing their explanations of reality from reality proper, despite Korzybski's admonition that "the map is not the territory." Conspiracy theory obliterates this distinction altogether. Conspiracy theorists take questions or criticisms of their ultra-paranoid thinking as evidence *ipso facto* of extreme naivete, or worse, of involvement in the very conspiracy the theorist is attempting to expose.

Conspiracy theory radically accentuates the negative characteristics of much "big picture" thinking, beginning with tautology, where the conclusions to an argument are imbedded in the assumptions and structure of that argument to create a self-referential, self-justifying, entirely closed system. To rabidly anti-Semitic Christian Identity wingnuts, the Jews are secretly plotting for world domination because they're an evil race because Jews are the spawn of Satan. There is no room for accident or coincidence in conspiracy theory; they become cause and connection. Everything is explained, or explained away by the conspiracy theory. A complex social reality is violently simplified, as when the way things are is blamed on the secret machinations of the Freemasons or the Trilateral Commission or the UN one-worlders or UFO aliens. In turn, a rather simplistic explanation of the world is made to do ever more grotesque cartwheels and epicycles to deal with that complex reality, as when the Roy Taylor Ministries provides a serious Christian Identity exegesis bizarrely "proving" that Don McLean's song "American Pie" is actually a profound commentary on apocalyptic Bible prophecy.

These flaws are common to any system of thought that attempts to make sense of the whole of reality. Conspiracy theory makes these fallacies central to its logic. Specifically, it's the characteristic of seeing a malevolent, manipulative, clandestine cabal behind the reality we take for granted that makes one conspiracy virtually interchangeable with another. It's easy enough to convert a true believer from one totalizing system of thought to another, say from Stalinism to born-again Christianity. Given the common structure and logic to all conspiracy theory, substituting the Trilateral Commission or extraterrestrials for the Illuminati or the Jews in the role of international shadow government is as simple as swapping out a game DVD from your PlayStation. Indeed, Jay Kinney and Paul Mavrides of *Anarchy Comics* fame did the *Conspiracy Lowdown* cartoon booklets of the mid-1970's, which featured a two-sided centerfold diagramming all the myriad conspiracies. One conspiracy diagram is tied to the next, with instructions given to cut out all the linked diagrams and tape them together to create one continuous, one-sided Mobius strip of interconnected conspiracy. It's a clever way to indicate the interchangeability of particular conspiracies within the rubric of conspiracy theory.

The Public Eye, a website of the Political Research Associates (http://www.publiceye.org) has documented how the right is recruiting from the left using conspiracy theory to bridge ideological differences ("Right Woos Left") and how the premier conspiracy theory "think tank" on the left, the Christic Institute, has taken a page or two from right-wing conspiracies ("Rightist Influences on the Christic Institute Theories"). Ostensibly left-wing groupings like Lyndon LaRouche's Trotskyist National Caucus of Labor Committees were transmogrified into fascist formations under the influence of conspiracy theory. The essential *modus operandi* of "left-wing" fascists/Third Positionists is to syncretize right and left wing conspiracies into a noxiously paranoid cocktail. Far from helping the Left explain reality, conspiracy theory is exposing the Left to right-wing influence, infiltration and takeover.

But isn't the Marxist notion of a capitalist ruling class a conspiracy? Not at all. Marx grouped people into social classes based on their rather obvious relationship to the means of production. Those who own and control the means of production are capitalist class, whereas those who have to sell their labor for wages in order to survive are working class. An individual's class interests derive from this relationship to the means of the production, in other words from his or her social class. Individual capitalists act in similar ways, not because they conspire together, but because they have the same class interests. A group of capitalists, all of whom are interested in maximizing profits, will naturally behave toward their workers in a similar fashion—decreasing wages and increasing work, resisting labor organizing, playing up racial and sexual differences, etc.—without having to conspire to do so.

Couple this to the simple fact that the capitalist class is self-aware and organized as a ruling class and there really isn't any need for an overall capitalist conspiracy. Members of the capitalist ruling class go to the same schools and country clubs. They know each other, belong to the same social and business networks, intermarry, and do each other favors. They openly sit on the boards of directors and occupy the governing offices of all the major institutions in our society. Moreover, they blatantly publish their plans for world domination in the *Wall Street Journal* and *New York Times*, and quite brazenly organize for the same through the WTO, World Bank, WEF, and IMF. Ultimately, all of society is organized around the capitalist ruling class's interests, so that, for instance, the *bourgeoisie* doesn't have to call out the police to crush rebellious workers on a rampage destroying private property. The police automatically respond because what the workers are doing is "against the law." Conspiracies may occur within this context, as when two corporations collude to restrict competition and monopolize a market. But the context itself doesn't require conspiracy in order to function.

Not only is Marxism NOT conspiracy based, but as a totalizing system—a theory of everything so to speak—Marxism has a mechanism to avoid the distortions that plague other "big picture" systems of thought. With *praxis*, we formulate a theory of reality from our sense perceptions of it, act on reality through our theory of it with varying results, then apply those results to change our theory of reality; a dialectical process that allows our understanding of reality to change and evolve. Of course, plenty of Marxists have ignored *praxis* and vulgarized Marxist theory into an ideology, even a religion. In doing so though, they are being very unMarxist.

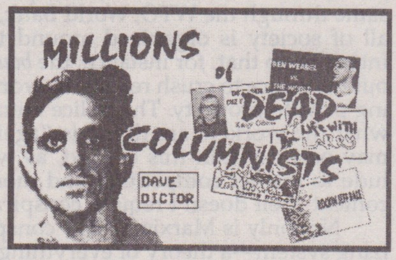
Let's return to conspiracy theory for one final comment. Aside from faulty logic and negative consequences, conspiracy theory has always seemed counterintuitive to me with respect to human behavior. From personal experience it's very difficult for even a small group of people to keep a secret for years and years without someone revealing it. The more people in on the secret and the chances that someone will spill it become astronomical. Thus the best-kept, most successful conspiracies, historically, have involved small, tightly knit groups of like-minded plotters. A part of their success involves their goals being very precise and well targeted, such as the assassination of a particular head of state or the suppression of specific information, as well as a very limited time span to keep their secret, most often limited to the lifetimes of the conspirators. A typical conspiracy theory posits, not hundreds or thousands, but tens of thousands, even millions of people being in on the conspiracy, not to mention the goal of world domination over millennia. Such a conspiracy wouldn't remain a conspiracy for a New York minute if we were to realistically factor in human behavior.

Most conspiracy theorists—aware that if inducted into the Illuminati today they would have a hard time not bragging to all their friends tomorrow "nyah, nyah, I'm gonna rule the world"—wind up demonizing the conspirators in their theory. It used to be that only right-wing conspiracy wackos vilified super malignant "godless Communists" or "Satanic Jews" whereas left-wing conspiracy nuts targeted ultra-evil institutions like the

CIA or Trilateral Commission. But the all-too-human tendency to personalize abstract forces and then demonize the enemy infects the Left as much as the Right. I remember pictures of Nelson Rockefeller and Richard Nixon in underground newspapers of the 1960's and '70's doctored with horns and tail and bloody hands, and let's not forget that the radical Left liked to call their enemy "pigs." When it's realized that the weakest link in any conspiracy theory is the human one, the humans involved need to be dehumanized, demonized, or made into something other than human. The logical conclusion to this, needless to say, is to make UFO aliens the conspirators.

None of this makes the slightest bit of difference to die-hard conspiracy theorists of course. No doubt, such folks dismissed me within the first three paragraphs of this column as a fool, a dupe, a stooge or a card-carrying member of their pet conspiracy. I was raised Catholic (Papal conspiracy), my dad was a Mason (Freemason conspiracy), my girlfriend is Jewish (Jewish conspiracy), and I've been a lefty since I was sixteen (Communist conspiracy) so take your pick. I do miss those checks from Moscow, now that the Soviet Union has collapsed and the International Communist Conspiracy has tanked...

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... You can find the "lost" Hooligan column at the new, improved http://www.huahuacoyotl.com. To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligan3@mindspring.com.



God, Religion, and the Twenty-First Century

Well it's a lofty name for the column. My son said something that I have said, heard oft repeated through the years. That is, that all religion is a trick to give the powers that be the means to keep the masses in their place. From the Pope in Rome that rules against birth control, abortion, and homosexuality, to those Aztec high priests who decided which nimble young virgin boys and girls got to get thrown into the steaming volcano. It's all a plot to keep the brothers and sisters down. But now in my older, wiser days I interject that religion is all that, true, but in the first place religion is really born out of the human psyche. The need to make sense of universal questions like how did we get here, who created us and this planet, and who and when do we need to give thanks to and give atonement to, that will insure our continued existence. Then of course we can ponder universal dualities like good and evil, ying and yang, male and female, before moving onto survival mechanism skills that were based on recognizing seasons of the year, life or birth (planting) in the spring and death and renewal (harvest) for the winter with all its cyclical fertility realities (full and half moons, nine moon pregnancies) in between. And with all this nature/jungle came fear of nature, the need to suppress it along with our natural desires, as well as harnessing/taming and thus ultimately destroying the planet (goodbye rainforests and female deities, hello global warming and the Holy Trinity).

So yeah, it would be safe to say the world's religions have delivered us to a very dangerous place in this nuclear and biological age with its petty divisions, its hatreds and rivalries (to think Islam, Christianity, and Judaism are connected to the same geographic fertile crescent and all are connected to the Old Testament's Abraham). The ideas of tolerance, forgiveness, and of turning one's cheek all seem to be lost in the pews of all these churches, (as they kick out all these sour, out-of-key renditions of "God Bless America"), mosques, and synagogues. As Gandhi said once, "Christianity is a nice idea for a religion, if only someone would practice it."

The state of America's religions are surely in disrepair as the Roman Catholic Church (which is run from the Vatican a lot like the ex-USSR's Politburo) has degenerated into a protection racket for wannabe celibate priest/child rapists. The spirit of Judaism has been overtaken for the excuse of messianic colonialism (there were 30,000 Jews living in Palestine seventy years ago, compared to six million now). Then there is America's number one pastor, the good old Billy Graham, Protestant father-confessor to every President from Eisenhower to Clinton caught on tape with Richard Nixon spewing forth long dialogues of his hatred and mistrust of the "Satanic Jews," then offering Nixon his advise about what to do about them ("I act friendly to them but they don't know how I really feel about what they are doing to this country"). Meanwhile the media feeds on the "weird" beliefs to be found in the Koran as the government under the clueless evangelical idiot of an Attorney General plots how to destroy Al Qaeda, Iraq, Iran, the American Taliban, and the civil rights of the rest of us here.

My solution is not entirely new. A new world religion. This new world religion must view the earth from space as its spiritual visual symbol. To remind everyone that we are a single genetic/tribal unit with 99.99 percent similar DNA. This is bad news to some narrow souls, but too bad. You and yours are not the chosen people. We can no longer survive divisional factionalism. "Thou shalt not kill," must refer to everybody, not just your own religious group's people. We are multi-ethnic peoples made up of various skin tones/shades. We are all earthlings that live on this cosmic lush planet and no one's shit is less stinky than anyone else's. New folklore with universal themes must be created. New heros for a new religion. New myths that will foster the mood for the sacrifices and the work that will need to be done. We pansexual agnostic punk rockers should be part of this movement. There is something to be said about "virtue." We got to do more than just do what feels good for the moment. There is more to life than 40 ouncers, speed and fucking each others boy/girlfriends. I say this with humility, having been a drug user/addict/alcoholic for 30-odd years. I am a late bloomer, but here I am. We have got to blaze new spiritual paths that will create some hope for the future that will somehow seem inclusive to those other narrowminded motherfuckers we share this planet with. On a personal level, try to find what makes you long term happy with your self and head for it like the Holy Grail. I say start local and work your way out and up. Good luck. We will need it.

So on that note let me say Millions Of Dead Cowboys (MDC) and Molotov Cocktail will be touring and fucking shit up (in a new spiritually blissful way) this summer. See the add in this and the next two issues of *MRnR* for dates.

Dave Dictor at mdcops@hotmail.com

CrimethInc. Workers' Collective Bullet-in

To my Comrades at the San Francisco Anarchist Bookfair

Dear anarchist, beautiful anarchist,

How do I say this? What words are left when we have burned up all our rhetoric on abstractions, glorifying the ghosts we keep close at hand to make this life more bearable? I had another panic attack tonight, just now, five minutes ago, like I used to in the years before that week in Seattle. I wanted to tear out my eyes so I'd never see another smug, uncontested Starbucks or Shell station, rip off these fingers that might not write the letter (whatever letter it is!) that could set off the next skirmish, throw myself off a goddamn bridge. The worst part is, I feel responsible, responsible now for always having an optimistic, bright vision, to help out in those moments when you might not, even though I know that's bullshit! But anyway, my fear is all I have to offer tonight, and there's enough of it to go around, so I'll share that.

We make it from year to year, some of us, in this world that denies all our dreams, by believing in miracles, that is the miracle, itself, and it's no mean feat. I've been in that world—spent days in it, weeks in it even, where everything was about to change, was in fact changing. Now when, on those days when I can't find my way back, my companions try to reassure me ("you can't change the world, but you can change one life," etc., etc.), it makes me fucking crazy, for I know that world of pragmatism and "being realis-

tic" is the counterfeit world, the illusion. If I never again experience what I experienced in those soaring hours, as I professed to my lover, tears in my eyes, on the Seattle waterfront Saturday, I will go to my grave insisting still that those transcendent moments of possibility were the real world, that this is just a farce, a stand-in of false fronts until we can get to the next of them. If historians write about me (curse them if they do!) one hundred years hence, noting that I was wrong about what would happen, that will be in an alternate universe, not the one I believe in, not the one I live in.

I am terrified: I'm terrified that we'll use today just to recruit for our little competing clubs, to argue over trifles and maybe fight for table scraps. I'm terrified that too many of you will have arrived here like I did, not knowing what you will try here or, worse, what direction to go next, and that all of us will consequently do our best to feel like what we're doing, or not doing, is good enough. I'm terrified we'll find, despite all our swaggering to the contrary, the resignation to survive here, here, with the Palestinians and veal calves dying, and die, too, even if only by waking day after day to say "I live" and reflect on it as something other than a victory.

If we were brave enough for it, our despair, for those of us who feel it sometimes, and I hope we're a small minority, could be a resource as great as any other. It could enable us to do the things our comrades, with their hope and high spirits, shouldn't have to do to make things happen. Otherwise, it is a burden of shame for us to hide, and truly an enemy to fear. Pride would hold us forever in no-win situations, struggling to prove that we can make them work, insisting that we are happy, that everything is going according to plan. We nail ourselves in place here just as some pledge themselves to love relationships of mutual misery, trying to prove to themselves they are "good enough" to make each other happy. It takes a ruthless mercy to discard sentimentality and remember all the things that never happened and still might never happen, all the dreams that never came true, but we can't wait forever, there's not time enough for that. Impatience is a virtue.

Whether or not you suffer these attacks of fear and nihilism, know this: those actions you are considering, that book you're thinking of writing, that hand you might try to extend, we need those, all of us, so badly now, don't you dare hold back out of insecurity or anything else! I've seen too many of my friends die now, driving themselves into living graves or real ones, because the world didn't seem wide enough to hold what they wanted. That's what we should be doing here, above all, I feel: widening the world, so the next generation of dreamers can join us, bringing their hope or despair or anything else, and, together, we can make something really happen. I still believe this can happen, is happening, must happen.

Still in love with all of you and the amazing things we can do,
An anonymous and abashed CrimethInc. ex-worker (2695 Rangewood Drive, Atlanta, GA 30345 USA)

"When your friends misunderstand your works and your enemies understand them all too well, when waking up every new morning feels like a defeat rather than a triumph, when the razor blade or the cliff's edge beckons, remember, he is not pretty, death, only well-advertised. Remember what they did to Michelangelo: they waited until he was dead and then painted over all the genitals in his Sistine Chapel, just as Nietzsche's hated racist sister presented him to the world as a proto-fascist genius after he lost his mind, just as Paul used Jesus, and Plato Socrates, and the Communists Durrutti. Give your enemies nothing. Let your tears freeze to stones we can hurl from catapults, screaming. Write your own epitaph and say it out loud, still alive. This life is a war we are not yet winning for our daughters, children. Don't do your enemies, work for them, finish your own." *—from a letter that didn't reach Sylvia Plath in time.*

Every year I make my annual visit to the Bay Area. I haven't flown since Sept. 11 and really wasn't worried or concerned about it. But they aren't kidding when they tell you to be there two hours early because the security searches are pretty intense. It's not that it was problematic, but it's a bit unnerving to have your coat, shoes, belt, wallet, and any other layers off while they are scanning you and riffling through your bag at the same time. Having your stuff strewn from one end of the conveyer belt to the other while you have no shoes on is somehow very disconcerting.

So I arrived in SF and it was like coming home. Finally I was there when the sun was shining and there was a lot going on...the Anarchist Bookfair and *Maximum Rock 'n' Roll*'s 20th anniversary celebration would have been enough in one weekend. But there was so much more. Most of my very best friends live in the area and some of my favorite people in the world were also around, so I was out of my mind with a non-stop adrenaline ride that never seemed to end. I was dancing on street corners everywhere I went and trying to get all my friends to stay up all night long with me and go on late night runs to the used bookstore. The daily dose of burritos and mud-thick coffee took care of me pretty well. There are so many great bookstores—I picked up a few books every day for the entire ten days that I was there. And I walked. Man, did I walk. I love walking. I forget how much I love walking 'cause I live in a town where most people drive everywhere, and I have to drive everywhere because of where I live. But in SF, when you are on vacation, you can walk and walk because nothing really matters. When you don't have to keep to a schedule and be somewhere at a certain time, you can walk and enjoy what you find along the way. And for that matter, even if you are in a hurry or on a schedule, a stroll through the hills for me, is a great exhilaration. My legs muscles were happy from activity and adventure and I didn't want to ever stop any of it.

You never want to go home from vacation, but I started to feel like I wasn't on vacation—I got so used to being in the Bay Area—it was so hard to leave. Having such inspiring people surrounding me; having my best friends at my side; having my peers in punk rock and zine publishing nearby all felt so good. Whatever sea of isolation I so often struggle with in other places just fell away and I felt full of purpose and focus and yes, my favorite thing—inspiration. Would I want to live in SF? Well no, cause of course it just wouldn't be the same. I have always known that the Bay Area was a place close to my heart that I could easily flock to—but after living in NYC I always thought it made more sense to put my energy towards some place that might need it more, rather than going to the same place as everyone else. With such a lack of friends and peers where I now live—I have questioned that and at times modified my opinions—feeling like it might actually be nice to have other peas in my pod.

I'm pretty sure that my fate does not lie in California. But man, fucking California (as for some reason I seem to have to call it) is good for me. It puts me back on track and seems to give me all of the things which I crave and love and seek on a regular basis. So I guess it's like a refueling visit for me to absorb it all and then I have to try and bring the California into my daily life. I have to remember that walking rules and that being mobile and ready to go at a moment's notice is a good feeling of freedom. I have to remember that good food can be found anywhere even if $5 burritos in five minutes are not around. I have to remember that really, wherever we are—we are all linked together—all connected in some way—and that when we actually do come together in the same place the spontaneous combustion is fucking awesome. But it can't be like that all the time—so when it does happen, it's a special treat to indulge in. I have to remember that so many of those familiar faces are familiar for a good reason. Oh, there is a lot to remember, and think about, and contemplate. And good friends mean so much. I'm thankful to have such good peeps in my life and I send my thanks to all of you who made my visit rock so hard!

Being there and celebrating the 20th anniversary of MRR really meant a lot. It's the sort of thing that gets you thinking... thinking about 20 years and what it means. I'm surprised in many ways that it's only been 20 years 'cause I'm coming up on 16 years myself with *Slug & Lettuce* and it seems to me that MRR had been around forever when I started my zine. And really, it had been. After all, I was 15 and doing a silly photocopied zine that really was rather clueless, while MRR was MRR—the "Bible" of punk rock for all us young punks all around the globe. I devoured each and every issue from cover to cover. I

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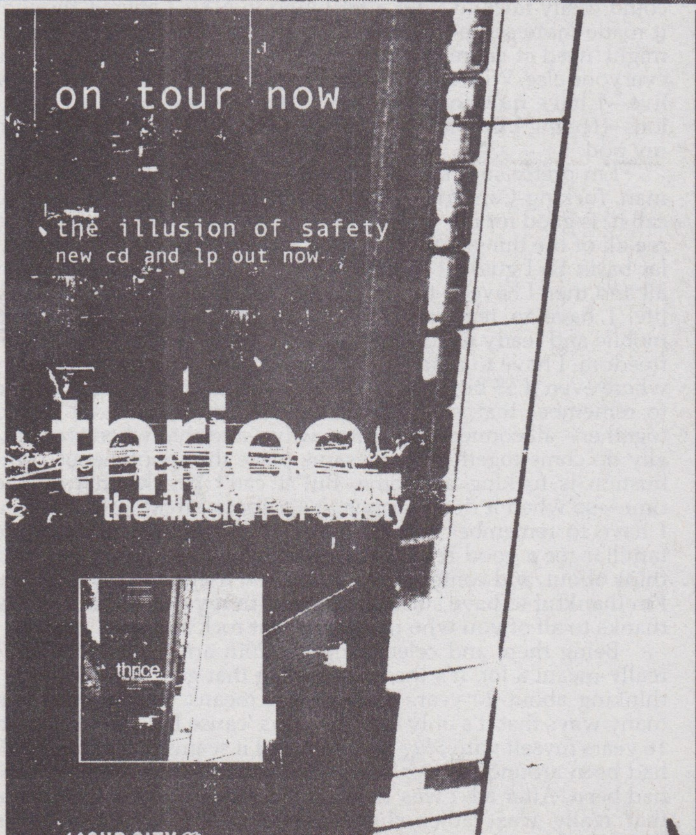
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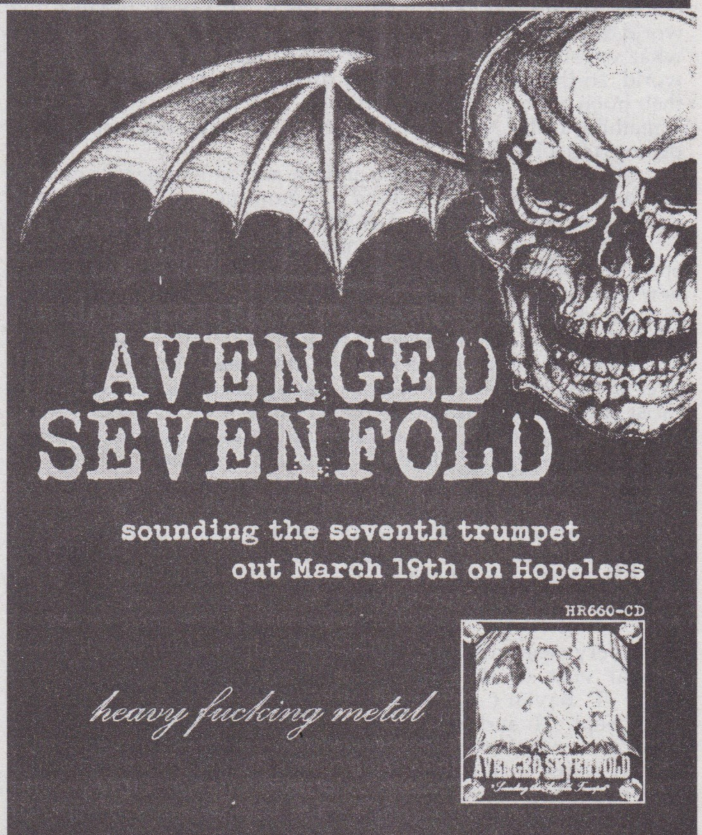
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found myself through MRR, and I found my friends and peers and long-time comrades through the pages of MRR. To even compare myself and my zine in any way to MRR is almost silly. But putting time frames in perspective can be funny. And finding your place with in that time frame and perspective can be even funnier. Where would any of us be without MRR?

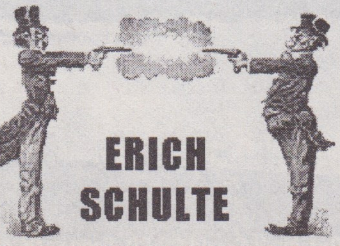
We wheatpasted all of the covers from every issue of MRR on the walls of Gilman prior to the two days of shows celebrating the anniversary. Being a part of that was really a treat. One of those moments that mean a lot in the large scheme of things, even it it's not so easy to put into words. Somehow just knowing that I was there, that I was somehow a part of it, was important and meaningful enough to me. I've always gotten a lot more out of things when I can help to make them happen. My stagehand parents instilled that attitude in me and it continues to manifest itself for me in the spirit of punk rock. And this whole thing about peers—has become really significant to me. Being around other people who I love and admire and who are filled with such great creative energy. It just rocks!

At the end of the second night of shows when it was all coming to a close, the band equipment was being loaded up, the record stalls were being packed away, people were drifting away, and I was running around saying goodbye to my friends... not just goodbye for the night, but goodbye for a while, 'cause the next day I was heading back to the East Coast. A good show often brings people from afar, and bands from other places, and it all comes together and is sometimes sad to see end at the nights close. But after a week of exhilaration, and 36 hours of non-stop making it happen action with the intense gatherings of people crammed into one short weekend's day with the anarchist Bookfair in the middle of two shows at Gilman—it was such a great climax for my visit that it made it even sadder to see it come to an end. I wanted to keep the night going forever—keep on rockin and dancing and smiling until the sun came up. So many awesome people and so many good friends. We wonder, "why can't it be like this all the time?" when we know that if it was, it would cease to be special. All great things go unappreciated when the become common—and so it's the special times that brings hordes of people together when we really get to celebrate. There is really something about being in the moment and knowing the moment is good. Knowing that it's a moment that will last, that you will hold onto and say "I remember when," or "I was there when," simply frozen in time and full of feeling. Those are the best moments because they really do stay with you forever. And there were a lot of those moments for me and I treasure them all. I'm glad that I can recognize them when they are happening 'cause it somehow makes it all that much better and more intense and meaningful.

As I was getting teary-eyed knowing I wouldn't see Arwen or Adrienne for quite some time, Shannon had her own burst of emotion, hugged me, and said "You have got the best friends. They love you so much!" and I cried, 'cause I knew it was true.

So I send some huge hugs and kisses and massive thanks to Karoline and Robert 'cause you guys are the *best*! And mad love and hugs to Adrienne, Wendy, Arwen, Aaron, Mike, Fly, Sascha, and Atom—you all make my life better. And thanks to everyone else who helps to keep MRR going on a daily and regular basis and brought it all this far for the 20th anniversary. And cheers to Sarah & Paul who I don't even know all that well, but who were an integral part of the anniversary festivities. You all rule!

XOXO Chris(tine) c/o Slug & Lettuce, PO Box 26632, Richmond VA 23261-6632



First things first. Check out the website my friends and I made at ruthlessreviews.com. It's unbelievably awesome. I can't sell it hard enough. We do album and DVD reviews, as well as some other shit, but definitely from a different perspective. Obscenely funny. And also just plain obscene in some parts, so I guess I should say, be over 18 or something.

A couple months ago, I talked about my idea to do what amounted to a critical interview with a pro-lifer. Having read a lot of the academic literature on the topic, the pro-life position looks totally untenable to me. I emailed the most prominent pro-life organizations and even a couple of state organizations—although I was not sure I was interested in talking to smaller organizations. I told them what I was up to and that *MRR* is carried by Borders and Tower and so on, and that *MRR's* readership were mostly pro-choice—i.e. the very people these organizations were trying to persuade. Many of these organizations have PR reps. Feminists for Life, for example, has a place on their site to contact one of their representatives to come lecture at your school. But, much to my surprise only one organization returned any emails. Maybe I'm naive, but it never occurred to me that organizations dedicated to persuading the public on an issue would be totally uninterested in a chance to address an audience of thousands of young minds. (I didn't tell them that most people just read the ads and stuff).

My only guess is that most pro-lifers know, on some level, that their arguments don't hold water. The organization that returned my email was called the American Life league. I got polite responses, first from the person who received the email, then from a guy he referred me to from Rock for Life. My first question was whether he accepted these points and if not, why not?

1. A particular religious view should not be the basis for law. I may have a correct view rooted, say, in my interpretation of a religious text, but that interpretation cannot be the basis for law, rather I must make my case for the view persuasive to those who do not share my religious convictions. Otherwise, we risk theocracy.

2. If I am making a controversial moral assertion that would be binding on your behavior, the burden to prove that assertion is on me. Examples would be "you should be a vegetarian," "you should not use contraception," "you should never fight in a war," and, of course, "you should never have an abortion." The burden is even heavier if I wish to make the moral constraint a legal constraint.

I never heard back.

So I'm left with a choice. Should I engage in a debate with some small-timer who either doesn't understand the issue or has an amateurish approach? The best candidate there seems to be Greg Koukle (http://www.str.org/free/commentaries/abortion/index.htm). He seems smart and is a good writer, but he says things like "When does an acorn become an oak? Well, no one knows for sure. Of course we do! An acorn never becomes an oak. An acorn is an oak. Period. That's what an acorn is. It's an oak in immature form. It can become a mature oak tree. But young or old, it's an oak." This comes from his article "Fetal Personhood: It's Simple." It's meant to refute the argument that, potentiality of the fetus to be a person does not mean it should be treated as a person, since we don't treat other things as though they already were what they might potentially become. Of course the analogy there is that an acorn isn't an oak *tree*. He knows that, he just drops the "tree" when it's convenient. Put "tree" back in and his argument is ridiculous—at best a naked assertion that an acorn is an oak tree. I just don't think chasing a guy like this in circles would make for an interesting column.

So, the best I can do is to try and show, by several examples, how flawed the reasoning of these groups is. I'm not aware of recent philosophical articles that make the case that abortion ought to be outlawed, which haven't been pretty well trounced. The most talked about recent article arguing for the immorality of abortion that I know of comes from Don Marquis, who argues that abortion is wrong because it deprives and organism of a "future like ours" which is the same thing that makes killing a person wrong. But this claim is susceptible to the counter examples of miscarriages, discussed in greater detail later. Briefly, according to Marquis' reasoning, a miscarriage is just as (if not more) tragic as the death of a teenager, a consequence that is at least very counterintuitive.

Here is the full extent of the largest pro-life organization's (NRLC) argument from their web page: "The life of a baby begins long before he or she is born. A new individual human being begins at fertilization, when the sperm and ovum meet to form a single cell. If the baby's life is not interrupted, he or she will someday become an adult man or woman." Of course, this

addresses none of the issues talked about in this column or the previous one. Just because something is human doesn't mean it has a right to life (individual sperm are human), it is not clear that something should be treated now as though it already were what it might become in the future (acorn, oak tree) and calling the fetus a human being and a baby begs the question. I can just as easily say that it is not a human being or a baby. They need an argument.

The California chapter of the organization has a more detailed argument in it's article, "person or non-person." The article addresses several arguments that the fetus is not a person, and attempts to show why they fail. But remember the second premise that the man from Rock for Life didn't want to touch. If I'm making a controversial, restrictive moral claim against you, it's not on you to prove me wrong; it's on me to prove that I'm right. If I want to restrict you from having an abortion, I must prove, something like, that a fertilized egg is a human being due the same consideration, where relevant, due healthy adults. Another article, "When Does Human Life Begin?" merely shows that fetuses are living human organisms with, for example, heartbeats. I've already addressed the incompleteness of the argument that abortions should be illegal because fetuses are human. When they develop a heartbeat, nothing much changes except that they have a heartbeat. The moral significance of that fact remains to be shown.

Feminists for Life's founder makes "The Feminist Case Against Abortion." She has two main points. One is that most feminists were pro-life prior to the 1960s. This obviously has little or no bearing on whether or not abortion should be illegal. She makes a good point against most of those who share her view that abortions should be illegal (the site doesn't say explicitly whether abortions should be illegal, which is pretty fucking odd and they won't respond to my emails, so again, pretty evasive. They *do* say that they "oppose abortion," and feminists have argued along these lines that abortion should be illegal). Namely, it's pretty clear that the best way to prevent abortion is to make it easier for women to have and raise healthy children, but pro-lifers generally seem uninterested in such measures, which would seem do indicate that the are not really concerned primarily with well-being of the fetus. The crux of the feminist argument is that women are often pressured into abortions, either by social factors or by spouses who don't want children. Liberal abortion laws effectively allow women to be pushed around as to what to do with their bodies.

To supplement this argument, I'll draw on "Abortion and the Sexual Agenda" by Sidney Callahan who argues in more detail that liberal abortion laws allow for women and their children to be neglected or mistreated because one can always say, "well, you could have had an abortion." The real reason for liberal abortion laws is to foster male oriented sexuality, in other words, promiscuity. But the "erotic model" of sexuality is only beneficial to women who are young and attractive. Moreover, it is responsible for VD, teen pregnancy, porn, and so on. In a nutshell, women are better off with strict limitations on abortion because the recognition of fetal personhood would increase the estimation of the value of women. It would also lead to a model of sexuality more pleasing to women and to more social services for women.

The feminist argument glosses over a rather important point: personal freedom. Even if it were better for women as a whole for abortion to be outlawed, that doesn't mean that society is justified in outlawing abortion. Suppose America would be a happier place if all women wore chastity belts till age 21 (less teenage anxiety about sex, no teen pregnancies, less crime, less disease, less rape). It doesn't follow that the government would be justified in mandating chastity belts. The reason is simple. We live in a society that says, for the most part, that you are a better judge of what is best for you than the government or society. There are exceptions of course, like the prohibition of drugs.

Now, it is possible that this approach is wrong. Maybe the government, or university professors should have a strong hand in making personal decisions about welfare for the masses. But, if that's the case, the pro-life feminist owes us an argument for why it's the case. Especially in light of the fact that existing prohibitions aimed at promoting the welfare of those who are being restrained in their decisions, like the prohibition of drugs and prostitution pretty clearly do more harm than good. The challenge I would make is to show why individual women cannot be trusted to make the right decisions about abortion and sex, even with pressure, while the pro-life feminist can make the right decision for her. I also want to know the evidence for the view that restrictions on abortion will lead to better social care for women and so forth, especially since this seems at odds with experience. Think of places with liberal abortion laws (Canada, Western Europe, liberal US states) and places with more restrictive abortion laws (Islamic states, Conservative, Catholic countries, the Bible Belt) Where do women receive better treatment? Along these lines, Jean Reith Schroedel, shows in her book *Is The Fetus a Person?* that states with restrictive abortion laws have more lenient punishments for people who cause miscarriages by assaulting pregnant women, which is the opposite of what you would expect if pro-lifers really believed that the fetus is a human being, and/or were primarily concerned with the fetus, but exactly what you'd expect if pro-lifers were primarily concerned with controlling and disempowering women.

One indication that the pro-lifer doesn't really hold the views that he purports to hold is his attitude toward the fetus. Few people react to miscarriages the way they react to the deaths of children. More to the point, pro-lifers are not terribly concerned about the vast number of miscarriages. If abortion is a holocaust, why isn't miscarriage a horrible plague? Most pro-lifers hold that life begins at conception. What about the 50-80% of fertilized eggs that fail to implant? Is this the leading cause of death in human beings? Shouldn't we do something about it? In fact, if something is wiping out as much as 80% of the human population, shouldn't it be our foremost priority to stop it? If necessary, marshal law should be declared.

Again, I can't give an exhaustive argument on this issue in this space. But the fundamental challenges to the pro-lifer remain in place. The burden of proof is on them. It isn't enough that the fetus is of the human species and it isn't enough that the fetus might become a person. Why do they care so deeply about fetuses and blastocysts that are aborted, but very little about those that are terminated naturally, or even by the beating of pregnant women? I'm going to try this again with the war on drugs people in another two months. I'm also still willing to deal with informed pro-lifers. Contact me at skipyskip@aol.com.

SAY ANYTHING:
PIPELINE POLITICS
MARCH ON

"In ten years or so we'll
leak the truth
But by then
It's only so much paper"
—Dead Kennedys, 1982

DUSHANBE, TAJIKISTAN—Writing for the website SpinSanity on October 15, Bush apologist Brendan Nyhan ridiculed my "absurd suggestion that the war [in Afghanistan] is 'solely' about an oil deal, trivializing the overriding motive of the attacks—going after Osama bin Laden's terrorist network and the regime that harbors bin Laden."

Nyhan's widely-circulated hit piece, commissioned by one of those outfits run by liberals so anxious to seem "non-partisan" that they mostly bash liberals (beware the man who says he's fair), was one among a volley of attacks that rained down on progressive commentators who dared to whisper three painfully obvious truths:

First, even before the 9-11 attacks, the well-oiled Bush Administration (bad pun intended) planned to take over Afghanistan one way or another. The only question was how and when it would be carried out.

American-aligned Kazakhstan sits atop the largest untapped oil reserves on earth, but can currently get its crude only as far south as Turkmenistan. Karachi, Pakistan's port on the Indian Ocean, awaits American oil tankers. Between lies Afghanistan; thus Unocal Corporation's $1.9 billion plan to run an 870-mile pipeline to link the Turkmen oil refinery at Charjou to Karachi. Trying to unify fractured Afghanistan under a

regime (any regime) that would ensure the safety of a US-sponsored pipeline, President Clinton funded the Taliban from the origins in 1995 until their "guest" Osama bin Laden bombed two American embassies in east Africa in 1998. The Unocal plan was shelved until September 11 gave Bush the pretext he needed to begin bombing and regain momentum for the pipeline plan.

Second, the ersatz "war on terror" has little to do with reducing, much less preventing, terrorist acts by Islamic extremists. The CIA has itself to blame for funding and arming these "evil doers" in the first place; the advantage of creating your own enemies is that you get to know them well in the process. Had the Third Afghan War actually been motivated by vengeance, Rumsfeld & Co. would have targeted groups in the countries that carried out the 9-11 attacks—Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Pakistan. Had it been prophylactic, the DOD would have bombed the biggest guerrilla training camps, which were, and still are, in Pakistan. And if the State Department had wanted to deny extremist groups the vast majority of their funding—millions of tiny donations collected in mosques throughout the Arab world—it would have denied them their most potent and legitimate rallying cry: unlimited US support for Israel's home-grown terrorist Ariel Sharon.

Ninety-nine percent of the estimated 5,000 to 15,000 Afghans killed by US bombs had absolutely nothing to do with 9-11. That's an atrocity, it's even worse than 9-11 and Arabs know it. Thanks to George W. Bush, you and I are now significantly *more* likely to die in an attack by Islamists. Remember: to the rest of the world, *we* are terrorists.

Third, Nyhan takes me to task for "the insinuation that US policymakers don't care about the victims of the September 11 terrorist attacks or the oppressed women of Afghanistan." Insinuation, hell. I'll say it loud and clear. Let's take the last part first. The Taliban ruled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001, more than half that time with direct or indirect American financing. Yeah, you say, but that was under Clinton. And yet, for the first seven and a half months of his presidency, *Bush never issued a single statement criticizing the Taliban's treatment of women*. During that period, he found numerous opportunities to discuss tax cuts, fast-track signing authority on free trade and countless other inanities. Long-suffering Afghans, it seems, only matter to US policymakers insofar as they affect The Great Pipeline Project.

What about the 9-11 victims? Well, it was the Bushies who rushed through legislation depriving survivors of their right to sue the government or the airlines. When push came to shove, Bush sold out the victims for a few millionaire airline CEOs. Let's all repeat it together: the victims, American and Afghan, have been used by this vile, cynical administration to line the pockets of its corporate sponsors. And now our soldiers are dying, not for nothing, but while carrying out orders that are making things even worse.

Dying for nothing would be an improvement.

Nyhan and other Bush aficionados' "debunk" the idea of a link between the Afghan war and the pipeline scheme using a line of reasoning lifted from "The Simpsons": We bombed Afghanistan because of 9-11, not oil. "Oil may be a factor," allows Nyhan, but it is a sideshow; the main event is bagging Osama. Um, but the Taliban offered to turn him over but we turned them down. And we *still* haven't found him. And Bush says it was never about bagging Osama. The fact is, it's mostly about oil. 9-11 or no 9-11, the US would never have invaded Afghanistan minus its oil component. Don't we deserve 75-cent-a-gallon gas in return for losing four planes and two big buildings?

As Homer replies when Marge asks him if he's lost his faith in God: "Nooooo! Noooo! No. No. No. No. Well, yes."

I expected the Bushies to wait a decent interval to prove me right about their real motivations in Afghanistan, but the Resident's 88 percent approval rating must be going to their heads.

Unocal-related discussions began while the bombs were still falling last October and picked up steam after Bush appointed an ex-Unocal consultant, Zalmay Khalilzad, as his special envoy to Afghanistan.

Then, on March 7, Afghan interim prime minister and Hamid Karzai (yet another former Unocal employee) flew to Ashkhabat to meet with Turkmen president-for-life Saparmurat Niyazov. "There is a project from Turkmenistan, over Afghanistan to Pakistan and then India. We agreed to discuss this soon, both together and with the leader of Pakistan," summarized Niyazov. "Everyone would benefit. Afghanistan would receive employment and a twelfth of the overall profits."

The Pakistani piece of the revived pipeline project (which will likely be built by—*surprise!*—Unocal) clicked into place February 8 when Karzai met with military dictator Pervez Musharraf in Islamabad.

But what of Bush's self-avowed pledges to help the oppressed people of Afghanistan live in peace and dignity? Though our soldiers will remain "indefinitely," according to the Associated Press on March 28, "the Bush administration says it will not send American peacekeepers to the country." In other words, US troops are there not to help the Afghan people, but to train Karzai's puppet army so they can eventually protect American business interests?

Nooooo! No! No. No. No. Well, yes.

(Ted Rall's new book, a graphic travelogue about his recent coverage of the Afghan war titled "To Afghanistan and Back," comes out this month. Ordering and review-copy information are available at nbmpub.com.)

In March 2002, the Ramones were inducted into *Rolling Stone* magazine's Rock n Roll Hall of Fame. While many punks are fretting over the fact that "their" band has been embraced by one of the prime institutions of Corporate Rock, I don't share such misgivings. I think that the pairing is a natural, especially in these days of commodified rebellion.

First let's agree on some things: The Ramones were one of the bands responsible for the revolution rock n roll underwent (a revolution opposed by Rolling Stones and corporate rock, but let's forget that for a moment). Their pared down, three-chord, retarded assault sent two messages to the world: One, eight minute songs built around a guitar solo were boring and unnecessary. And, two, anyone could do it. For those two things, the Ramones deserve a lot of credit and praise.

They were also responsible for two to five great albums. Personally, my favorite is *Rocket to Russia*, and I don't think many folks can top the song "Danny Says." However, if you are going to be honest, you have to conclude that after *End of the Century*, it was diminishing returns. The band's sorry output is a result of not knowing when to stop. Which would also be fine if they actually evolved.

Let's forget the Ramones for a second and look at Black Flag. The LA hardcore pioneers were the best American punk rock band, period. They were loud, they were fast, and they were hated by all the right people. Unlike the Ramones, Black Flag was not part dress up. They were a reaction to the daily life, the suburban boredom that most of teenage America endured. Black Flag was not about art or theater. As Thurston Moore notes in the liner notes to the reissue of Crime's *Hot Wire My Heart*, it took West Coast hardcore to make East Coasters realize that a lot of the stuff they were turning out was pretentious art-school crap (something they could have also learned from the Pagans).

Like the Ramones, Black Flag's good stuff is limited to the "first four years" of their existence. After Henry Rollins took over vocal duties and Greg Ginn fell into hesher hell, the band started to suck. With each album, the songs became more and more boring, a bad mix of sonic sludge and green bud-induced haze. Live shows were drawn out and torturously dull, bad enough that we started to refer to the band as Slack Sag.

But, even though late-Black Flag allowed Ginn an opportunity to churn out Jerry Garcia riffs over reconstructed Cream hooks, even though it served as a platform for Rollins to build a career out of reading whiney he-manisms on college campuses

to "sensitive" football players, even though the band's last four years resulted in four listenable songs, at least Black Flag didn't rest on their first four years of fame and fury. They had the balls to move on and try new things, even if that meant failing horribly and alienating 90% of their fan base.

The Ramones, on the other hand, continued to turn out the same tired shit year after year, reworking old songs into "new" ones, never abandoning the formula that they created. For a brief moment—*End of the Century*—they flirted with something different. But less than six months after its release, they were back on the road with their Gabba Gabba Hey sign.

Yeah, sure, they made some great songs, some of the best rock n roll has to offer, but how many times can you hear "Blitzkrieg Bop" blaring out of Madison Square Garden's PA system during a Knicks, half-time show before you realize that that classic is now as much a part of Jock America as "We Will Rock You" and "Welcome to the Jungle?" How many times can you see the same exact Ramones concert before you admit that you are witnessing the punk rock equivalent of washed up 60s soul bands trotting out their old hits at some state fair, or a "classic" rock band rehashing crowd favorites at an Indian casino? Really, the death of the band's most iconic member is the only thing that saved us from a VH-1 sponsored 50th anniversary reunion show, live at Caesar's Tahoe with Iggy Pop as MC and the Squirrel Nut Zippers opening.

As snide as that sounds, it is the godawful truth. You know it, I know it, and the remaining Ramones know it.

The Rock n Roll Hall of Fame deserves the Ramones. Just as the Ramones deserve to be in a museum. Watching two of the surviving three cruise up on stage in their cartoon garb cemented my opinion.

Dee Dee in a suit and tie? Well, it is tough to harsh on Dee Dee. The man was honored to be included in a place that "accepts" Chuck Berry and Jerry Lee Lewis (the music, if not the men). It was a big occasion and if his ma taught him one thing it was to dress up for your big days. And that he did. At least that shows some honestly, some sincerity that cut's through the band's cynical career.

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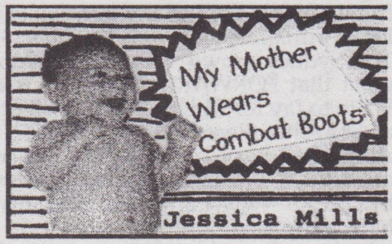
I really don't care if you agree with me or not. However I will accept you letters and gifts. Scott Soriano, 1114 21st Street, Sacramento CA 95814 scotts@sl.net



I've said it a thousand times already and I'm going to say it again now. When I got pregnant and started telling people that I was expecting a baby, they told me that it was going to change my life. For the months that I was pregnant, every time I heard another person tell me this, I'd look at them with the blankest of smiles and nod, thinking to myself, "Yeah, no shit. Of course it's gonna change my life!"

I thought I actually knew what they were saying and more, but I didn't have a clue. Come to find out, what they were telling me again and again was an extreme understatement instead of an oh-so-obvious statement I was rolling my eyes at them for. Now that I think about it, maybe hearing it again and again that many times from random strangers to close family and friends should have been the warning itself. That many people knew what I was in for but didn't have the time (or perhaps it was the heart?) to tell me straight up, *"Having a kid does not just change your life, it completely overhauls anything having to do with your life up until now. Your "self" will be put on hold. And you will be very, very tired. Oh, you will also have no more social life or if you do still have a little one, it will only be among people who also have a kid. Don't dare pursue the same social life you had with your childless friends. You will only end up talking about your kid and parenting-related issues and you will feel boring, boring, boring, and tired."*

Only my friendly USPS counter worker, Connie, told me, "Enjoy everything now, girl. Do it all for you. Sleep, go to the movies, whatever, cuz after that baby's born, ain't no one goin' to pay attention to you no more. Not even you will pay attention to you." She's the only one who even came close to giving me a reality check.

Aaaggghhh!

It's been two years now that I've been a parent to a really amazing, rapidly growing and changing little person. Two years and I still feel like I don't fully understand all the changes in myself and my life. Most other parents probably don't fully understand them yet either, but there are still days that hit me like a ton of bricks when I realize that I just can't just up and do whatever I what, how and when I want to do it.

Used to be that I didn't want to get a lot of sleep but would have to. Now I want to but can't.

Used to be that I didn't ever want to work and didn't have to that much to get by. Now I want to and have to so just so I can have a break from doing child care.

Used to be no effort to run a few errands... *Send out four or five zine orders, get food, get book from library. No problem, 45 minutes.* Now it takes actual planning to just run those same three little errands around town on my bike... *Try to get E-J dressed without a struggle. Find a snack for her to bring along. Does it look like it's going to rain? Yes? Damn, can't do anything because E's got the car and walking with an umbrella trying to push a stroller at the same time really, really sucks, especially when she starts screaming, "Me in puddle! Me in puddle!" And she's not going to stand the rain splashing her little face if we ride the bike. No sign of rain? Good. Now, should I ride with her in the bike seat, the safest bet, but have to deal with buckling her in and out of the seat over and over and taking her helmet on and off every time to do so? Or should I just ride with her in a sling on my hip to avoid that hassle? That way I'd also have a way to contain her when we get to the exciting, full-of-things-to-knock-down-and-put-in-her-mouth post office, grocery store and library. Ugh, at least two hours.*

Why can't it just be easy like it used to be? I mean, before, I actually got things done. Not the case now. Having a kid means you have to organize child care with other people just to have a few hours to yourself. And when those few hours roll around, you can only choose one, maybe two things off of your by now very lengthy list of things that have been "put off until you can get to them." I so don't want to choose only one or two that I usually just choose to do none because I really need a shower, beer, and a nap.

I might not have known just how much my life would really change, but I did know that a kid wasn't just another line to be penciled in on my daily to-do list. I knew I wasn't going to be able to go to this meeting, or that shift at the volunteer record store or Food Not Bombs serving, or house the pirate radio station, or stay on top of reading and writing and band practice and touring. I knew I had to shed some of my time consumers.

And I did, hence the aforementioned list of things that have been put off. But then, once E-J got to be about a year old, I started getting more involved in things where child care was organized for those of us with kids who wanted to participate in the whatever was going on. And so I wound up busy all over again, spreading myself too thin, having to shuffle time around like I didn't want to in the first place. And with these new involvements, I might have a break from child care for a few hours at a time and have a chance to get involved in some organizing and activism I think is important, but I'm still left with a craving for more social stimulation like I get when I go to a show or band practice or just hanging out shooting the shit at friends' houses.

So, I didn't really know what all those people meant when they were saying that having a kid would change my life, and I thought I knew how to pare my activities down in order to attentively care for a child. I'm still learning every day how to exchange my former, childless life for a new one, one that has my most unique relationship with a new person to date integrated into it. With that thought, I'm holding a lot back, just like all those other people were holding back what they really meant.

I guess what it comes down to is that unless you ever become a parent, you won't know either how having a kid radically changes your life. Likewise, you also won't fully understand what I mean when I say that having a parenting relationship with a brand new person is unique and truly fucking sweet, fun, and amazing.

I'll just leave you with some of her conversation that took

place when she walked in the door with her daddy two hours ago... *Hi mommy! Emma at Liz house with Blake and Sadie. Sadie tummy hurt. Sadie throw up. Sadie sick. Me scared. Me cry. Hold you mommy. Like a baby. Want some boobies. Mooooore booooooobies! (She nurses for two seconds or less and then picks up a tambourine.) Music, mommy, music! (I push play on the CD player and a Hot Water Music song starts.) Chuck singing, mommy, Chuck singing? (She bangs the tambourine on her butt, throws it down and picks up a wooden bead.) What this, mommy, what this? (I tell her it's a red sphere, part of a new toy Chuck brought her.) Lead spear! I hold it Emma's hand, mommy. Lead spear! Thank you, Chuck. Thank you, Chuck. More boobies, mommy, more booooobies!*

If you can empathize, punkparents, get in touch. Contribute! Spare the readers having to hear more of my transcribed Emma babble that probably only I think is funny.

yardwideyarns@hotmail or PO Box 12839 / Gainesville, FL 32604

PS. I *just* got the following email message. How in the hell did he know I was just griping about having been so changed by having a kid?

...my how you've changed since becoming a mother... crashing on the floor of an airport in the wee hours of the morning. the jessica i knew would have passed out on the rails somewhere between here and south dakota, never once griping about a lost pacheesey board or whatever.. i guess motherhood does change a person. i hope i'm never a mother....

Battlefield

Jay from the BLURTERS and Snapshot Records has a great compilation for you bums! It's a new CD called *We're the Blood 2*. On this fucker THE BLURTERS—honorary Confederacy of Scum rockers—Australian Chapter—lead the charge with "Sleepin on the Shithouse." Fuck yes! Song two by THE BLURTERS is "Trinity Grammar," which rocks like a motherfucker!!! Next you have a punk song with a message; "Fuck Off," which is balls-out punk rock for you cretins! Song four is "Sharehouse," and this shit is blistering hot! The BLURTERS finish off their portion of this loud and proud punk CD with a first-rate rocker, "Can't Get Away." THE BLURTERS are one fucking hard-ass punk rock band ! THE BLURTERS don't get the respect they deserve—this CD might start to change that! Next up on this compilation is CHANGEOVER. These West Gosford, New South Wales, Australian punks *also* rock like crazy! CHANGEOVER rip through "Drinking in the Park," "Fuck the Discos," "Fear of Culture," "Rebels Without a Clue," and "Aussie Punx." This is great fast, rowdy punk rock! The next band featured on the *We're the Blood 2* CD compilation is CHARTER 77 from Melbourne, Australia. These punks start with "Get Fucked," lead into "Melbourne Punx" and then land right on their political number, "Slobodan." Next up we have great music for you punks! The song is "Pornos," a fast rocket—fueled killer track! Then you get a great cover of the BUSINESS's "Drinking and Driving." All right! Band number four on this fine compilation is RIOT 99, from Toronto, Ontario, Canada punking out with "Fuck America" (hey—fuck Canada!), "Decade on the Dole," "Destroy the City" (the title cut on RIOT 99's debut EP from last year), "Start a Riot" and "Guttersnipe." The final band on this compilation is SISTER MARY ROTTEN CROTCH, from Kansas City, Missouri. The hard-nosed female vocals give SISTER MARY ROTTEN CROTCH the push over the top! The women run through "Dies Irae," "Turning on Me," "Instigator," "Ain't Fucking You," "Fuct," and "Little Slut." Don't mess with these women (or Brent the drummer)! You will get your skinny ass booted into next week!

In case that wasn't enough scumrock for you losers, Jay and Snapshot Records have another compilation for you. This one is called *Beer and Bile—Worldwide Streetpunk Compilation* and it showcases thirty-one tracks, some of the best of which are supplied by Australia's STANLEY KNIFE, THE BLURTERS, DOC EVIL, and AVO. This CD represents so many hooligans! Read this list of culprits—outstanding in their depth and their depravity: THE GENERATORS doing "Dead at 16;" STANLEY KNIFE doing "Streetpunk;" BOMBSHELL ROCKS doing "Unstoppable;" DEMOLITION HIGHSTYLE doing "Wayward;" THE BUSINESS doing "Ghetto Youth;" THUG MURDER doing "Power;" THE BLURTERS doing "Sleepin' on the Shithouse" and "Beer n Bile;" DOGSHIT SANDWICH doing "Wanna Be;" NOT AN OPTION doing "Hollywood Marriage" and "Streetpunk Rocknroll;" THE ACCIDENTS doing "Dirty Fucker" and "Election Scam" (both songs are very good!); BEDLAM BEGGARS doing "Ain't Nowhere to Go" and "Livin it Up;" VOICE OF A GENERATION doing "Police Story;" BULLDOG SPIRIT doing "Fake" and "Show No Remorse;" BLISTERHEAD doing "Radio Riot" and "Cellblock Rock;" DOC EVIL doing their absolutely fucking brutal "Touched by an Angel" and "Unemployment;"—Great stuff!! VERY METAL doing "Soldier" and "Hit and Run;" AVO doing "Trough Boy" and "Now or Never" (a cover song originally done by THE FREEZE); ADOLF AND THE PISS ARTISTS, one of the premier steetpunk bands in the United States, doing "This is Your Law" and "No Cross to Bear"—fucking excellent!!!; THE BONES doing "Pumpin' Gas;" and FLATLINERS doing "Military City USA" and "Numero Oucho."

Snapshot Records also has a retrospective of the Canaberra City Hatecore band FORWARD DEFENSE. The CD is called *Rest in Violence 1995-1998*. This CD comes with a deluxe booklet that enumerates the many songs on this violent hardcore punk CD. You start with the ten song demo from March 27-23, 1995. The early versions of "Coffee Shop Rebel," "Born to Rule," "Rock Spider," and "Pitiful Little Man" are fucking raw and brutal. You get great covers of "Evil," by the 4-SKINS, "Out of Step" by MINOR THREAT, and "My Own Mind" by UNIFORM CHOICE. These last three tunes were included on three different compilations. Next you get five songs from the split 7" with ARM'S REACH, from May 1996. Following that, you are treated to a fourteen song onslaught from the self-titled FORWARD DEFENSE 12" from November 23, 1997. You get excellent cover versions of "Violent Attack" by VOORHEES, "Get Out" by AGNOSTIC FRONT, and "Slow Down" by YOUTH OF TODAY. The great, rough, shouted, singing here is provided by Kevin, who later became infamous for his work with AVO—APPREHENDED VIOLENCE ORDER. The last eight songs are live from April 7, 1997 at the Iron Duke Hotel in Sydney. The Iron Duke punk rock club was legendary! This band was legendary! The Sydney crowd was, by all reports, very enthusiastic. It's great that FORWARD DEFENSE is documented for posterity! Write to Jay for BLURTERS and all other Snapshot merchandise at Snapshot Records, PO Box 175, Georges Hall, NSW 2198 Australia; www.geocities.com/sunsetstrip/performance/9801/; email: jay_snapshot@hotmail.com. For the BLUTERS—www.angelfire.com/ms/theblurters; email: hatedandproud77 @hotmail.com.

Attention skinheads and punk rockers! Blind Beggar Records from Germany proudly presents for your listening entertainment the deluxe *Brewed In Sweden* double LP gate-fold package! This elaborate gift pack features twenty six tracks by streetpunk and Oi! bands from all over Sweden.

AGENT BULLDOGG from Stockholm starts the ball rolling with a good gruff skinhead anthem called "Backstreet Boys"—their song about what "real" life is about for working class people, not the way the rich perceive it. The "Backstreet Boys" song was recorded back in 1990 during the session that would later become AGENT BULLDOGG's first album.

DIMS REBELLION, from South Stockholm, have song number two, called "Next to the Gods," about people who have died for their beliefs—sacrificed their lives so others may live. This song is up-tempo featuring keyboards and melodic guitar.

Band number three is WILDCAT STRIKE from Linkoping, with an intelligent song, "Out in the Night," about fighting for nothing—wasting all that energy which could have been used for something more positive.

Next up is FREEMARTINS from Orebro with their song "Proud," about their love of the great country of Sweden. This song has good vocals and chugging guitar parts. Next you get the NEGATIVES from Landskrona with a rollicking streetpunk

number called "Back at the Front." This tune lashes out at the politicians that try to control your lives.

THE HEADHUNTERS, from Nykoping have song number six, "Heroes of the Night" from their debut CD *Eat This Dickhead* from 1998. This song is good sing-a-long Oi! that would fit in with the bar room crowd rather nicely!

Side two of this disc starts off with Linkoping's FISTICUFFS, doing their song "Stay Out of Our Way," about the assholes who steal—whether it's possessions, precious time, or taking credit for things you didn't accomplish. This is street-punk with choruses supplied by the whole band, solid bass and pounding drums.

Song two is UNIT LOST from Eskilstuna with some good advice to young skins and punks in their song "Do You Wanna Know?" "Use your brain! Start to think for yourself! Wake up! Be your own person!" The vocals are littered with broken glass and battery acid. They are deep and forceful! This is a great song from a great band with a timely message!

The third band featured on side two is MEDVORGAR-GARDET, from Goteborg, singing "You are to Blame," about "people who claim to be working class but prefer to see others doing the hard job." This is decent melodic streetpunk.

Next, you get the PINTS, from North Stockholm, with a tough as nails streetpunk song called "Shadow of the Past," about keeping your head up and not taking crap from anybody! The vocals are dripping with anger and the superb guitar playing punctuates the entire thing. Good song! Let's hear more from the PINTS!

South Stockholm's PLANET POGO play a punk rock ditty called "Fifty Ones," which is dangerously close to pop/punk and ska. Skip to THE RIGHTEOUS, from Rimbo, Sweden, and their song "I'd Fuck Her," about prick teasers who won't deliver the goods. This is a rocking little Oi! number!

PERKELE, from Goteborg, finish side two off nicely with their fine streetpunk tune, "My Home," about their beloved Sweden. On this song, PERKELE play melodic street n' Oi! with well crafted vocals, accomplished guitar runs, and lots of hooks. This is available on the Bronco Bulldog CD, *Voice of Anger*.

Side three of the *Brewed in Sweden* compilation begins with another great track by AGENT BULLDOGG, "This is Your Life," appearing here as an English version of a song that was on the second AGENT BULLDOGG album. This was recorded in summer of 1994. "This is Your Life" has a good street feel to it, not unlike a BUSINESS song.

Next up you get DIMS REBELLION doing "Rich Little Bum," with its resentment about kids who get everything handed to them without working!

WILDCAT STRIKE perform "Behind My Back" about how rumors spread and people buy into the lies. This song has a good ringing guitar sound and first rate singing.

Song four is FREEMARTINS doing "Our Own Direction," with a mid-aced melodic streetpunk sound. Next up is the NEGATIVES, playing "Magnificent Human Race," a NEW YORK DOLLS meets the US BOMBS rocker which has a solid street feel to it. Very good!

Song number five is "Destination Nowhere," by the HEADHUNTERS, and this tune is a slower melodic chugging Oi! selection. The FISTCUFFS are up next with "Join the Pack" about one of Sweden's favourite indoor activities—drinking with your pals.

Side four finds UNIT LOST kicking a lot of ass with "This is Our Night." The blood curdling vocals on this song are reminiscent of the great Al Barr in the BRUISERS. This song has stormtrooper guitars, good choruses and driving bass and drums. This is the real shit!

MEDVORGARGARDET offer up their song "Rebel Heart," a well-honed melodic number about hypocrisy in the media. SNIFFING GLUE make their first appearance on this *Brewed in Sweden* compilation, with the strong "I Don't Give a Damn," which amounts to a thorough indictment of the middle-aged scum bags in their suits and ties who represent society.

PLANET POGO offer "Victorious," which reminds me of the CLEATS from Canada. THE RIGHTEOUS slow things down with the acoustic guitars on their song "The Saga," which is too long and too mellow.

PERKELE finish off this compilation with a melodic ballad, "Visitors," about beer drinking and camaraderie.

All in all, this is a high quality twenty-six song compilation, with bands like UNIT LOST, AGENT BULLDOGG, and DIMS REBELLION jumping out and demanding your immediate attention.

Blind Beggar has a new CD available by the streetpunk band THE NEW BREED. This one is called *Day to Day* and the lyrics range from respect for your family, the working life and its challenges, drinking with your friends, and unity amongst the new generation of punks and skins. The musical influences could include STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, SWINGIN' UTTERS, SOCIAL DISTORTION, and THE BELTONES.

Also available on Blind Beggar/Pure Impact this month is the HAMMERBOIZ CD called *Steel City Brewed*. These skinheads from Hamilton, Ontario, Canada have a hard sound and start the CD with a flourish on "Johnny." Good skinhead music! After slowing things down with "Resolve," the HAMMERBOIZ come back out kicking on "For All You Do." This rocking streetpunk tune has excellent guitar!! On "Beerist" the band elaborates on one of their favorite subjects—beer!! The HAMMERBOIZ push through "Oh' Canada" and arrive at "Let's Drink." This fine song will put you in the mood for just that—a drink!! Next up you get a rocking skinhead rock tune, "Common Man." This song itemizes some of the problems of the workers. Check out these lyrics: "Look up from the grindstone/You need food, you need a home/Why's it so hard to make ends meet?/They get you comin' and goin'/Big business suckin' and blowin'/Profit from your sweat and you needs/Big business with their scams/Politicians with half-baked plans/Union brass with outstretched hands/Fuck you any way they can/Everyone screws the common man/Windbag professional leaders/Candy-coating bad ideas/They'd sell you out to stay on top/They say it's for the good of the country/But they just love power and money/they talk the talk you walk the walk/Some of your union brothers/Are more equal than others/Their interests lie ahead of yours/One hand give a handshake/The other pockets the dues they take/Until your boss closes his doors." Good stuff!!!

The song "Cherry's Docs" comes next and this tune's very catchy with a melody that will stick in your head—you'll find yourself singing along with the second play. "Burns Pub" is a tribute to a favorite watering hole in Cambridge. Next up is the title cut, "Steel City Brew"—the guitars move right along, the vocals cut through the clouds of beer, and the band sings good harmonies. "Pigskin Pete" is the next offering and this ballad ticks by at a medium pace for some Oi! /football support. The final song on this *Steel City Brewed* CD is called "Anthem," and this number celebrates the pride the HAMMERBOIZ maintain. The guitar playing is top notch! This is a strong CD! Write to HAMMERBOIZ, c/o Martin's Bowling Alley, 929 King St. E, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L8M IR9. Write to Blind Beggar Records, Bogenstr 25, D-66957, Eppenbrunn, Germany; email: blind.beggar@oirecords.com.

Maximum Rock n' Roll just got a copy of the LUTECE BORGIA, *Dans La Boue* EP. This is French skinhead/punk music with some unusual breaks and tempo changes. the majority of the singing is in French and the music is very catchy with chunky guitar sounds and good vocals. LUTECE BORGIA steams through "St K-Sto," "Pills," "Dans la Boue" and "Lucrezia." This shit is so damn infectious you will catch yourself tapping your foot. Find this record through Lutece Borgia, BP 11, 92312 Serves Cedex, France; benjamos@yahoo.com; www.lutece-borgia.phd.fr.

Intimidation Records from Fife, Scotland has a fine EP available for you punks this month. The band is OVERSPILL and the EP is called *Who's War*. The music is fast punk in the 1983 No Future/Clay Records vein. The lyrics are quite poignant—read on: "Living in this world with nothing to live for/Born to die? Still fighting an internal war/Born unto this earth, different paths to take/I'm misplaced, made a mistake/Had no name, I was only a number/Had no name, I was only a number/Only a number, only a number, only a number/Why am I here? What have I done?/Still fighting my war, holding their gun/Looking around, what do I see?/Death, destruction, and dishonesty/Never understand it, never understand it/Why am I still doing this? I'm fighting who's war/I fought for a cause, no one understands/The war is over, for me it still goes on so/Lying in the streets, memories untold/Being

this face, I'm not so cold/Had no name, I was only a number/Had no name, I was only a number/Only a number, only a number, I was only a number." Yeah!! Punk as fuck!!!

Badman Records from the Czech Republic has a screaming hot thrash outfit for your bleeding ears. The band is called STOMPEDE and they hail from Tokyo, Japan. This recording is from April '96, and it kicks a whole lot of punk rock ass. The boys blaze through "Jo Anny Ta," "Drunk 48 Hours," "Sic You," "Stomp the Sunset," and "No God, No Man." This is fast, noisy, chaotic hardcore for you knuckleheads. Pushead Contributed a very good cover painting for this EP. Contact Martin Cesky, Nebrehovice 7, 38601 Strkonice, Czech Republic; www.bedman-records.com.

Hostage Records has some fresh punk rock music for you losers. DISCONTENT, from Southern California, mine some of the same territory that BONECRUSHER or the STITCHES do. What you get are six raw-as-fuck punk songs that speak volumes about the youth of today in the big city. DISCONTENT start off with a bullet, with the title cut of this mini-CD, called *Shot Down*. Read the lyrics to this fucker: "I got lost in the crowd/My engine seized/And I'm going down/Tune in Tokyo/I've got nowhere else to go/Shot down in a cloud/Can't breathe and I'm fading out/Adrenaline overload/Mayday on the radio/Shot down in a cloud/Shot up shot down/Static on my screen/I don't understand/What it fucking means/Warning lights overhead/Gotta make sense/Of this fucking mess." Yeah! The punks proceed to blast through five more blistering numbers: "Loaded Like a Gun," "Machine," "Dirty Crooks," "Generation Waste" and "Got a Girl." This is real good shit for you punk rockers!

The second mini-CD out for you this month on Hostage is THE FAKES with their six song CD *Nothing's Real*. This is good Southern California beach punk in the style of THE NUMBERS or those old fucks THE CROWD. Showing a nice touch, THE FAKES cover a Chuck Briggs (ex-US BOMBS) song as a tribute to the recently deceased rocker. Chuck was well-liked and respected throughout the punk rock community. On this CD, THE FAKES play the song, "Ritchie" by Chuck and include a picture of the man inside the CD. Rest in peace, Mr. Briggs.

Write to Hostage for DISCONTENT or FAKES merchandise: Hostage Records, PO Box 7736, Huntington Beach, CA 92615-7736; www.hostagerecords.net.

You should look for an early HAMMERLOCK CD on Man's Ruin called *American Asshole*. These songs were recorded back in 1996 and 1997, and this shit kicks ass! You get bloody country scum-punk driven to the hilt! Travis and Liz fuck your shit up with a great mixture of tough hillbilly tunes and punk rock. HAMMERLOCK crank out something fierce on "I Shot My Baby" and then fucking line you up for a mighty ass whoopin' with the title cut, "American Asshole." Fast as fuck punk! One of the best tracks is "I Thought I Was An Outlaw." This shit rocks!

After Liz and company sashay through "Take Me Down the Road," we get a guitar saturated cover of the amazing MERLE HAGGARD number, "Big City." Brilliant!

HAMMERLOCK fucking burns down the barn with the song, "Sunshine"! These guys are so goddamn country! HAMMERLOCK covers "He Stopped Loving Her Today" and "Pride of Franklin County," and you can bet they hang a new set of testicles on these bastards!

Continue on and you get: "Knock Her Out," "K.J.," "Battlefield" (fucking killer!), "Day That U Die" (fast as fuck!), "Devil's Right Hand" and "Media Sucker." This is a great CD from the early HAMMERLOCK years! For the current HAMMERLOCK catalog write: Steelcage Records, PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125. www.steelcagerecords.com.

KERMIT'S FINGER from Boston, Mass., has a great ten-inch record out for you right now! The slab is called *Jacques Jon Benet Bombshell*, and this fucker continues the nasty legacy of one minute songs these punks have been force feeding you for the last couple of years. This evil three piece has the ability to grab you by the throat in the first two seconds of the song, and hold your attention until the song dies a violent death. KERMIT'S FINGER smash through "Whiskey," "Holy Crap," "I'll Never Run," "Love Song for a Dead Child," and "Just Not Right"—and that's only the first side of this fucker. Side two unveils the great tune "Strangers on the Street," "Circus Performers." "Comic Book Shop," "Don't You Tell Me," "Shit for Brains" (a cover of the NERVOUS EATERS' song), and "Puke on U." Fucking punk as fuck! Write for this disgusting punk morsel to: Kermit's Finger, PO Box 458, Boston, MA 02129; dafinga@kermitsfinger.net; www.kermitsfinger.net.

MCR Record Company from Japan has a storming new CD available for you damn punks! This attractive five song mini CD is presented by a Japanese band called THE SOLUTION and the title of the CD is "I'm Pissed Off." The band comes out swinging hard and fast with the title cut "I'm Pissed Off" which rocks like crazy!! The lyrics are about the daily frustration of working a crappy job. Great!! Next THE SOLUTION tear into the song "Oppressed Youth," which sounds a little bit like "Warhead" by the UK SUBS. Good!! The boys move through "Evil Ways" and "Changed Friends" and finish off with a fine punk rock song "It's Up To You." THE SOLUTION sing in English and the lyrics are printed inside the CD insert. We will look forward to more output from these punks!! For your copy of "I'm Pissed Off" write to MCR Company, 157 Kamiagu, Maizuru, Kyoto, 624—0913 www.dance.ne.jp/~mcr Distributed in the U.S. by Sound Pollution and in Europe by Agipunk.

Combat Rock Records from France has a new punk rock CD prepared for you punks and skins. The band is J'AURAIS VOULU and the title of the CD is "Sans Trahir." This CD, their second, is filled with fourteen well crafted punk rock melodies sung in the French language. The musical pace ranges from slow to medium fast with the ringing guitar sound featured on all tracks. The lyrics are printed in French inside the CD. This polished, melodic French punk will weave it's spell on the punks who are exposed to these songs. Write to: Combat Rock Records, 7 Rue du Paquis, 57950 Montigny les Metz, France. combatrock@free.fr.

Japan's spikey-haired thrash band BOMB FACTORY have a punk/hardcore exhibition out now on Hell Hornet Records. The CD is called *Go This Way*. BOMB FACTORY come out of the chute with "Down"—very heavy! Then the boys traipse right into a punk rock melodic number "Go Straight." Song three is "Jimmy's Backyard"—complete with tastefully done guitars and fascinating choruses. The fourth song in this eclectic punk milkshake is "Remember," with its RANCID-style punk-rock-lite riff. Fifth in the order is "Lost My Way," with some pop-punk sensibilities, not unlike ONE MAN ARMY. The number six song is "Puke," which has some good guitar parts crunching along in the background. Song seven is called "Easy" and the pace on this is slower and dangerously close to that ska-crap that many Hellcat label bands employ. Number eight is the soft ballad—skip to number nine, "Break Up"—more of the GREEN DAY flavour that the kids love. Song ten is "She," which starts out promising with full-fisted guitars and ends up in a groove that is inhabited by the likes of contemporary DROPKICK MURPHYS or the SWINGIN' UTTERS. Song eleven is "Rage," and once again the guitars lead the way. On this number BOMB FACTORY get a little more punk venom flowing. Twelve is "Sick of You," and the harmonies combined with the guitars might remind you of Sweden's BOMBSHELL ROCKS. "Fling Your Angry Fist" is good straight ahead punk with a favourable comparison to THE FORGOTTEN. "Break It Right Now" has some good metal guitar breaks for you headbangers. Wrapping up this mixture is "One Day," a polished punk nugget to end the whole shebang.

TANKA RAY has a damn decent new CD available on GC5's Cosa Nostra Records. The boys from Kansas City, Missouri start out with "Six Month Skin," about kids who embrace the skinhead culture just as a fashion. We move through "Seal Your Fate" and get right into "In My Head" which has great guitar rhythms and hooks like one of THE BODIES songs. Next you get a medium fast punk burner called "Just Politicians"—read these smart lyrics: "You wanna lead, but you just fit in/You wanna try and be different/But it's just the same old shit/Sometimes you don't know what to do with it/Regurgitate what your idols said/Why can't you think with your own damn head?/You're just a kid: monkey see, monkey do/You say "Fuck Everything," no, "Fuck You"/All your idols are just politicians/And everything that you say is from their mouth/You say you despise politicians/But look what you and your friends have become/You would be cool if you walked the walk/Your image now will be lined in chalk/You're just a fake

into politics/Makin' friends by deals and tricks/You wanna lead, but you just fit in/You wanna try and be different/You're just a kid: monkey see, monkey do/You say "Fuck Everything," no, "Fuck You."

TANKA RAY plow through "Recalcitrance," and "Can I Close My Eyes," which range in influences from SOCIAL DISTORTION to the REPLACEMENTS. "The Crew" is an up-tempo sing-a-long anthem, "playing our hearts out for you." "Real" has authoritative guitar riffs with passionate vocals. "Tanka Ray" has loping drums and bass with perfect guitar punctuating the whole scenario. Song ten is "KC Streetpunk Rock and Roll." This song has a two guitar attack with driving rhythms and heart-felt vocals. "We Were What We Had" picks up the pace considerably for another fine BODIES-type of punk rock tune. "How to be a Hoodlum" uses the ringing guitar introduction with shouted choruses to get the point across. The final song on the TANKA RAY *And So I Abide* CD is "Young Hooligans," and this song celebrates the camaraderie of the boys piling in the car and going to the show. Write for TANK RAY product to: Cosa Nostra Records, 291 Redwood Rd., Mansfield, OH 44907. Contact Tanka Ray at: 4508 East 9th St., Kansas City, MO 64124.

Until next month—
See you fucks
Down at the bar.

Mykel Board sez:
YOU'RE WRONG!

He bounced me around like a dingleberry on a running poodle. On 14th Street. Looking for a bar. Not any bar, but the special one. The one with the hair dryers in it. Goddamn it. Why can't they put numbers on these buildings. Is it here? I turn quickly. Suddenly, "*Watch it!*"

I'm grabbed viselike between two meaty hands. Physically moved a foot to the right. Picked up, pushed aside. Then, this ugly whiteguy with slicked back hair and a plaid shirt. His pouty-mouthed girlfriend too. They walk past without glancing back.

My reaction? *Yes*!!! New York is coming back. New Yorkers are *rude* again. Finally! We only need a few gunshot tourists, some mugged rich people, and we're on the path to recovery.

If I could jump up and click my heels, I'd do it. And there's more. I cross Washington Square Park. There's a new sign.

In most parks, you'd see a polite warning about dog shit. Something like: PLEASE CLEAN UP AFTER YOUR DOG. But this is *new* New York.

PEOPLE WHO DON'T CLEAN UP AFTER THEIR DOGS, DON'T DESERVE TO OWN ONE. Wow! Talk about rude! It's even bad grammar!

I'm starting this column in a plane headed to New Orleans. It's Deedee's 50th birthday. A three-day party. My esophagus and prostate already ache. I'll let you know what happens. In the meantime, I wanna write about courtesy. Or rather the lack of it we call rudeness.

Whatever your definition of PUNK, it has to include rudeness. Forerunners of punks were the mod RUDEBOYS. Punk bands, almost every punk symbol, every record cover, every song lyric, every attitude is rude. PUNK and POLITENESS go together like VEGETARIAN and SENSE OF HUMOR. The return of rudeness is a call for celebration by everyone with a hint of punkness. For that matter, by anyone with a hint of freedom-loving disregard for social conventions. Giuliani complained about rudeness. He rammed politeness up the nostrils of a compliant New York public. But, was Giuliani polite? Wasn't sweeping bums off the sidewalk rude? Wasn't arresting potsmokers and casual drinkers rude? Didn't the subway, with his encouragement, tell people to be rude? DON'T HOLD THE DOORS for your fellow passengers. DON'T GIVE MONEY to panhandlers. DON'T LEAVE YOUR NEWSPAPER ON THE SEAT for someone else to read. Isn't that the height of rudeness?

Maybe rudeness isn't so great after all.

And what about my pet peeve? That one irrational rectal bug, a singular irritation completely out of proportion to its harm. WRONG SIDE ESCALATOR STANDERS. I hate 'em. Escalators are made with two sides: a walk side and a stand side. The worthless bags of selfishness who stand on the walk side make me want to kill.

Dija go ta retard school or what? You see a line of people on the right and an empty leftside. You think that's for you? Your private line rest-space? Your little moving office so you can stand next to your pals and discuss falling stock prices? You think that's just yours, asshole? Don't get me started.

So this column was gonna be about courtesy. It was gonna try to find the proper balance between rudenesses. I was gonna rationalize two kinds of rudeness. A cruel Giuliani type rudeness that actually hurts others, and a punk rudeness, that is direct, challenging, even annoying, but does no harm. Oh, I had the excuses, the usual litany of self-righteousness.

But now I'm on another plane. This one headed to San Francisco. Before I hit Lima, Peru. There, I'll have other stories to tell. Now, however, I had some perspective on my New Orleans adventure, so the focus of this column is going to change a little. First, let me take you to New Orleans.

It's Deedee's 50th birthday party. He used to be a roadie for ARTLESS and was even in the band for a time. He's the wildest man this side of GG Allin. He's Hunter Thompson, Larry Flynt, and Scrooge all rolled up into a Hawaiian shirt over a buddha belly. Now he's living with A, one of my formers. You might remember her from my story about her wild party in Montreal.

Deedee's in the car that meets me at the airport... in the passenger seat. Driving, is a Jew-looking guy in his late-thirties. His short salt-and-pepper hair is cut close. His sideburns form huge triangles on each side of his face. He smiles like he knows me. Being the senile old fart I am, I figure he does. I smile back like I know him.

"I'm not drivin'," Deedee tells me. "I'm on acid.... Want some?"

He hold out a tiny envelope with a heart stamped on it.

"No thanks," I tell him.

"Oh, I forgot to tell you," says Deedee, motioning to the driver. "This is Pedro. He's here with Jay."

Jay has been living in Los Angeles for the past ten years. He's been my best friend since he was 16. He too, served a short term in ARTLESS penitentiary.

"Hi Pedro," I say extending my hand over the front seat.

"Hey baby," he says.

"Uh oh," I think.

After we drop my small bag off at Deedee's house, we drive to where Jay and Pedro are staying.

HOONK!!! A car cuts us off. Deedee swerves suddenly, slamming my shoulder and head against the window.

"*Damn niggers!*" he says. "They should kill 'em all! That's what I want to see. A world without *niggers!*"

Now I've seen Deedee be a lot of things in my life: gigolo, skinflint, druggie, drag queen, foot fetishist, scat movie maker, roadie, rockstar... at least a hundred others. But I've never seen him a racist. It scares me. He sees it on my face.

"It's the South," he says. "Sometimes just living here... It gets to you. Can't help it."

"Anyway," he continues, changing the subject, "I know Jay was your best friend, "but he's... er... different. He's got a new girlfriend. I hear she's a knockout. Kind of an arm ornament or something. That's not the main difference, though, Just part of it. I don't think it's really him. Maybe it's just a phase... you'll see."

The first thing I see is *slacks*. Jay's wearing slacks! I don't think I've ever spoken to anyone not a relative who wore slacks. I don't mention it. Instead, I talk punk rock.

"Did you hear that the CONNIE DUNGS broke up?" I ask him. "It's been a while now. One of life's tragedies. Brandon has a new band though...."

"Are you still listening to punk rock?" ask Jay. "If you were 16 and someone told you that you would be listening to 20 year-old music, you would have freaked. I can't believe you're still listening to that worn out stuff."

Deedee returns with another Abita for himself and a can of St. Ides for anyone who'll drink it.

"Pull my finger," he says, before letting rip an earth-trembling fart. "So Jayjay and Pedro, wadja do today?" Before they answer, Deedee is up and at the refrigerator again.

"We did the CD thing." says Jay.

"Yeah, baby," says Pedro, more like Wayne Newton than Austin Powers.

"We got some classics," says Jay. "This great blues stuff. From the 1930s."

Huh? Didn't he just complain about my liking 20 year old music?

Before I can consider this, Deedee walks in holding a fistful of small envelopes. "Acid for everybody." he says, handing one each to Pedro and Jay. "Here Mykel, this one has your name on it."

"No thanks," I tell him. "But... er... would you mind crossing off my name?"

"Ok," he says, reaching into his shirt pocket. "How 'bout a couple lines of coke?"

"Yeah baby," says Jay. He and Pedro move to the kitchen table to divide and snort. I stay in the livingroom.

The *real* party begins the next day. That evening, while Deedee makes final preparations, Pedro, Jay and I head for a local bar to see the WOGGLES. Before we leave, Pedro and Jay have to change into fresh button-down shirts and *another pair of slacks*. The shirt is OK. Country and Western, with snaps. Some folks have a t-shirt and an goin' out shirt. Who'm I to say its wrong?

But what's with the slacks... and the cocaine snorting? Deedee, I can see. He'll do anything at any time, but Jay?

"Getting into that Hollywood cocaine stuff," I say.

"Oh no," he says as defensively as if I'd ask him if his herpes came back. "You're out of touch, Mykel. That hasn't been fashionable for years."

"Fashion shmashion, it's Hollywood." I say. "You gonna be wearing a leisure suit?"

The WOGGLES are OK, I guess. They remind me of The Real Kids. I don't really want to talk about the band. I want to talk about what happened.

The first and worst thing is *they danced*. Not the Woggles, but Jay and Pedro. My fuckin' god! If there's one thing a New Yorker hates it's dancing. I don't mean slamming around trying to draw blood. I mean arm-waving, tush-swinging *dancing*. Right in front of the stage. La de dah. Pedro and Jay, a pair of disco-ettes.

It's as dorky as wearing a lampshade on your head at an acid party. They're grabbing girls, pulling 'em onto the dance-floor and then dancing. Two adults in button down (snap) shirts and slacks, trying to pick up girls, by dancing with them.

I hide in a corner.

"Hey Mykel," shouts Jay from across the room. "Why don't you come over here and dance with us?"

I try to sink through the floor. Eventually, they ignore me.

It's late. I'm tired. The band is finished. I want to go home. Pedro has the keys to the car, my only way back. I look for the guys. They're standing by the side of the stage. Each talking to a girl, one blonde, one with dyed-dark hair. The girls sit on barstools, with obviously boy-bought frilly drinks in their hands. They're dressed like they should be chewing gum behind a cash register at K-Mart. Combined IQ equal to my penis length. Total floozies.

I walk outside, pace, walk back in. The LA boys're still talking to the girls.

"Yeah, I'm a screen writer in Hollywood," says Jay. "I write for HBO and all kinds of movies and things."

"He's a director too!" says Pedro.

Jay nods.

"Wow," says the floozie with the bigger breasts. "Can you get me a part in a movie?"

Jay looks at her breasts and smiles.

"Look," I say, "I hate to butt into this exercise in intellectual repartee, but I wanna go home."

Pedro reaches into his pocket.

"Here's ten bucks for a taxi," he says. "We'll see ya tomorrow."

The next day is *the party*. It's a good one. Three bands, a stripper, Deedee stripping, lots of booze, Sebastian, the sexiest lesbo I've met in years, Michelle, a colored Jewess, also sexier than the back end of a Puerto Rican boy.

Pedro and Jay are there too. Jay wears yet another shirt and another pair of slacks. They don't stay for all the fun though. Two *new* floozies came in halfway through the party.

"Yooo hooo! You cute little Hollywood personalities! There you are!" Jay and Pedro soon leave with them.

Next day: we're out again. Sitting in The Hustler strip club. Pedro is off getting lapdanced. This cute little girl sits down next to Jay and me. Either she works here, or she likes to hang out in very little clothing. She's got a spike piecing in her lower lip.

Jay buys her a drink. I start talking with her. She says her name is Sadie. She's a nice little person, with petite natural bosoms and a Southern face with slightly crossed eyes.

She tells us she's from Nashville.

"How do you like this club?" she asks.

"It's really nice," I say, "except for the music. I hate that disco stuff."

"What kind of music do you like?" asks the girl batting her brown eyes at me.

"Punk rock," I tell her. "I like punk rock."

"Punk rock!" says Sadie, "I *love* punk rock. Me and my girlfriends used to have a punkrock band."

"I was in a punkrock band," says Jay.

I glare at him, but don't say anything.

It's Sadie's turn to strip. She does it to the RAMONES and the CLASH. I resist the temptation to call out "Play some Blues! Jay wants *the blues*!"

Pedro returns from the private room in back. "Hey Mykel," he says, "you want a lapdance? I'll buy you one."

"Pedro," says Jay, "you just lost your job. The money in your pocket is all you have left."

"That's OK," he says. "I like Mykel, and I wanna buy him a lap dance."

Wow, my opinion of this guy just rose 175%.

"No thanks," I tell him.

Jay speaks to the punkgirl, "You can lapdance me," he says sniffing some white powder off his upper lip. Off they go, into a back room. I leave and lament.

Though it never rains in LA, the ground here is muddy. I crawl through that mud to the large Mickey Mouse gates on the fence that surrounds the city. I wrap my fingers around the enormous iron ears that form the bars. I don't want to get in, I want to be heard. I push foreword, lean back, jangling that iron monster. I shake it hard. Again and again. I fall to my knees, still clinging to the monstrous mousehead. I lift my own head, baying like wolf at the moon.

"City of Angles," I scream. *"Give me back my friend!* You're a soul-stealing satan. You've taken my best friend. You've changed him. You've stolen his spirit. You've turned him into a cocaine-sniffing, slacks-wearing, floozie-chasing, disco-dancer! *Give him back!"*

I shake the fence, harder and harder. Slowly, I sink to my knees. Then I'm prone, face down in the mud.

The earth shakes under me. A great weight settles on my back, pressing between my shoulders. I try to stand, but cannot. Without looking I know, it's God. I recognize the feel of her ass-cheeks against my flesh.

"OK, Mykel," she says. "You're so hoity toity on your little pedestal of self-righteousness. You're so busy talking about how people's cities changed them. You ever stop to smell your own stool?"

Then the pressure releases, as God goes off to annoy someone else. But what about me? Did I turn down a free lapdance? Did I refuse to have an attractive young woman press up against me, making mons friction along my pencil shaft until the graphite shoots? What's with me? Have I been turning down drugs all weekend? Have I been the party pooper, the stodgy fart? What's got into me? A prude, tsk tsking at people's excesses? God, you're right!

Here I write about how cities create monsters. Here I say how The South turned Deedee into a racist and LA turned Jay into a parody of LA. But what about me?

Giuliani! That bastard! He's changed me. Got under my skin. Crawled around in my pubes. Shoved himself like a stick up my asshole. He changed me! Turned me into a prude! A *new* New Yorker! Oy vey... I'm getting out. Taking a vacation. Hoping you can take New York out of the boy as well as the boy out of New York. I'll let you know what I become when I get back from Peru. Keep your flashlights focused on my shining path.

****

ENDNOTES: [*Visitors to my website: www.mykelboard.com or subscribers (email to: god@Mykelboard.com) will receive a few extra endnotes. There are just too many to keep up with.*]

—> *Will they arrest me as a terrorist dept:* Nowadays, it seems like information is being classified right and righter. They'll throw you in jail if you tell people that you can light a fart. Whoops.

So here's some classified info that might get me in trouble!!! I heard it on the internet, so it must be true:

Peanuts are one of the ingredients in dynamite.

There you have it. I did it! Classified information out in the open. Let's see how long it takes before I hear that knock on the door.

—> *Remember Jen Angel dept:* Short-term *MRR* editrix and 1/2 of *CLAMOR* magazine sent me the following info. I promised to pass it on for her.

[1] The 4th Annual Underground Publishing Conference is scheduled for June 22-23 here in Bowling Green, OH. Last year almost 1,000 people were here. Will you be one of them this year? Visit www.clamormagazine.org/upc> to see the new UPC site

[2] In December, Jen and I joined forces with some other partners to form Allied Media Projects, Inc. Allied Media Projects is a non-profit organization working to create independent media infrastructures. Simply put, AMP will be used to raise much-needed funds for independent media work. Interested in helping us out? drop us a line at info@clamormagazine.org

—>*Just keep buggin' 'em dept:* So Mykel, when's the book coming out?

Yeah right. Now you can do something about it. I A ME-ST, a compilation of my columns for the past 20 years, is now "being edited" at Versus Press. I'll believe it when I see it. But, if enough people bug 'em, We can get 'em to publish the thing before the CIA and NOW put viruses in their versus.

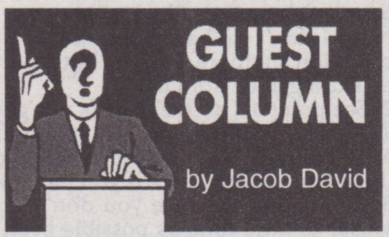
So, go to the website: www.versuspress.com, see if you can find my book in the announcements or some other obscure section. Click on an email link. And tell those guys to *let Mykel's book out of the cage.*

—> My pre-Peru trip to San Francisco was like old folks night. Besides meeting my book publisher, I got to see the *MRR* crew, Ruth Schwartz and family, Jeff Bale, goddess Adrienne Droogas, Jen Angel, Chris Boarts, my Mongolia savior, (no relation!! So stop asking), Winston Smith, and tons of other people who hate each other. Ah nostalgia.

—>*Take good news where you find it dept:* Ted from See Hear sent me a *NY Times* report about a decent court decision... finally!

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP) — In an important Internet policy case, a federal judge ruled Wednesday that Yahoo! Inc. does not have to comply with a French order that it keep users in France from seeing Nazi-related content on the Website.

Yeah!



Next time you see television images of the 9/11/01 explosion at the Pentagon, ask yourself: "Do I see evidence of a plane crash anywhere?" Look closely. Look very closely. There's no plane.

In fact, the "crash" site at the Pentagon does not resemble a crash site at all. And the unexplained delay by Bush, Jr.'s branch of government in declassifying the so-called "crash" footage only raises even more questions. For instance, are you aware of the fact that law enforcement investigators, in search of "plane" wreckage from the Pentagon, as "our" military officials claimed to have "disposed of it" immediately following the "crash"?

Why did George Bush II's Administration take six months to release a series of "still photos" that purportedly show an airliner striking the Pentagon? Why is it that (no matter how closely those images are inspected) it is impossible to recognize anything even remotely resembling a plane? By the way, do you find it at all believable that the Pentagon's very own video cameras failed to frame the explosion (with no inexplicably missing time segments, unlike the incomplete series of "photos" finally unveiled for the public on 3/7/02)?

And, if any governmentally-gullible individual should attempt to assert that "our" military (which consumes over half of all congressional annual discretionary spending) cannot afford to purchase and install state-of-the-art video surveillance equipment to keep a watchful eye over the grounds below some of the most highly-protected air space on planet Earth, that individual is either insipid, incredible or merely incredibly insipid!

Are you aware of the fact that the mysteriously damaged section of the Pentagon was under construction at the time of the yet-to-be-explained explosion, with relatively very few employees (none of whom were high-ranking) occupying that part of the building on 9/11/01?

Here's what the "Defense" Department Office of Strategic Influence's obviously-doctored footage shows: #1. A "plane" full of fuel hits the ground. #2. The magic "plane" slides hundreds of yards into the Pentagon intact. #3. Then this supposed "plane" explodes; but is of course conveniently never actually visible during the belatedly declassified sequence of spliced imagery. What an interesting coincidence.

Now, utilizing the lately much abandoned concept of common sense, here is what one would expect to happen in the known physical universe: #1. A plane full-of-fuel hits the ground. #2. This certainly less surreal plane explodes FIRST. #3. Then the fiery wreck would slide into the Pentagon/Pentecostal Pentagram.

You'd think that (with six months time), the psychological warfare professionals behind George Bush, Jr.'s shadow government would have at least become competent enough to correctly create that disinformation detail. But, as Granddaddy Prescott Bush's business partner and personal friend Adolf Hitler once said: "The bigger the lie; the more people will believe."

And a lot of otherwise "wonderful" people in America do seem to believe these days, don't they? Much like many 1930s-era Germans honestly believed the ruling Nazi Party's propaganda blaming communist conspiracy for the burning of the Reichstag. But, as we all now know, the Nazi liars destroyed the Reichstag themselves in order to intensely inflame German public opinion, so that very few critical questions would be asked of Adolf Hitler and his administration during their preplanned "War on Communism." Sound familiar?

Isn't it interesting that Enron lobbyist/Vice President Dick Cheney just finished an extensive arm-twisting campaign in the Middle East, attempting unsuccessfully to coax and/or coerce support for a rerun of his "glorious" Gulf War? Curious, most especially when this clandestine presidency has failed to provide any evidence at all proving an Iraqi connection to the mailing of highly-advanced weapons-grade anthrax to liberal US Democratic senators, not to mention to members of the "liberal" media.

In fact, in a special investigation, the BBC recently revealed that the person behind the terrorist anthrax attacks on America is an American military scientist who worked on a covert (and illegal) biological weapons program at Ft. Dietrich, Maryland for the CIA!

Now, why is it that the "free corporate press" in the United States has recoiled from reporting this revelation? Or, for that matter, why isn't "our free press" at least asking a few tough questions of John Ashcroft's "Justice" Department right about now?

Part One: Just because you have a studded jacket, doesn't mean you don't have something in common with Archie Bunker.

All too often in this little scene we like to call punk, men are put on pedestals while women doing the exact same thing are ignored and not given the same sort of accolades. You see this happening all the time—be it in the assumption that zine editors with androgynous names are male, to the uncouscious act of only focusing your attention on the man while engaged in converstations. It's something that

I've recently become more and more aware of as it happens in my daily life here at *MRR*. An inordinate amount of attention, at times, has been focused on some of my efforts here at the zine—while Arwen doesn't often get recognized in the public eye. It's fucked up, because she and I do the exactly same thing, and it simply plays into the traditional way in which society views the working dynamics between men and women—with men in the foreground and women to the back. I don't agree with that sort of structure, and I'd like to think that most punks would agree with me that reinforcing that sort of patriarchal model is screwy and moreover, not very punk. It's just something we all need to be more conscious of—I'm just as guilty as the next punk in perpetuating this sort of dynamic at times, but I feel that this needs to be addressed and discussed in the greater punk scene with a greater amount of frequency.

Part Two: Mohawk Summer.

I hearby declare this summer of two thousand and two to be Mohawk Summer: The Punx Strike Back. While large chunks of what was once the underground have been swallowed up, commidified, and sold back to us by bastards we once considered our allies, it is now time for those who still believe that punk is something more than just a soundtrack to band together and take back this scene. D-beat ragers need to realize that they have something in common with all those geeky pop bands and the geeky pop bands need to recognize their commonality with those stage-diving hardcore thrashers and so on and so forth. There is no more time for apathy—this is a struggle we will win. Punk, by its pure independence from major corporate media, is political—now we need to start making the connections with others who feel the same—all the while never giving up on what makes us punx. I wanna see punx by the bucketload at demos, having book discussion groups, telling amusing anecdotes, making their own pants, and doing community gardens. Getting involved but never losing their identity as punx. No more time for excuses or just spending your time doing nothing but swilling cider (nothing wrong with that, but...) Let's take this scene back this summer—and return it to something we all can look on with pride. Peace to the streets, the basements, the warehouses, and the squats! War on the greedy business men, the back-from-the-dead "punk rock" dinosaurs, and all the other sharks who in their lust for the almighty dollar dilute and destroy this scene!

Part Three: The list is thousands long (or at least made up of a bunch of twenty-somethings).

I feel myself getting older everyday. My hairline is receding and my struggle with my waistline is something that I've just about given up on—but one thing that I don't see myself giving up on is this scene...it just means too much to me. The connections, friends, and bands that make up all this means just too much to me to ever walk away from it—I only bring this up after seeing so many friends who once screamed the loudest about their involvement drift off into the lives they disdained for so long. While I understand that this life that we lead is not for everyone, it's just hard to watch people I once had an intense connection with drift completely out of my life.

ENDNOTES:

1) Go see BREAD & WATER and GARUDA on tour when they roll through your town. They are awesome people and amazing bands.

2) Don't forget about AMDI PETERSENS ARME, ETA, VICTIMS, MANIFESTO JUKEBOX, and all the other foreign bands touring the US this summer! Be sure to go out and support them!

3) George Bush is still a murderous bastard. Ariel Sharon should be held personally responsible for the massacre of innocent Palestinians in Jenin. Don't know what I'm talking about? Be sure to keep up on current events, folx, their won't be a test or anything, but the price may one day be your life.

4) I highly endorse indymedia.org and commondreams.org—be sure to check them out for a differing perspective than that which is pumped out of mainstream news like so much bile.

5) Write me cause I like mail via the *MRR* PO Box. If you are a chump you can email me at mikethorn@mindspring.com. Sometimes I take awhile to get back to folx, but I do my best.

BE PREPARED FOR ACCIDENTS...

WITH ARWEN CURRY

There are certain people you completely recover from, right, so thoroughly that you're thrilled to be alive, smooching new boys, totally self-assured in your better-offedness. So how is it that when they send you a crummy email, months later, your whole day is spent fighting off tears?

"Don't dwell on it all day," says Mike Thorn, as I leave the house. When I show up at work, all bedraggled and red-eyed, my sweet-hearted supervisor Mary looks at me and shakes her head. "You're brooding about it. Stop brooding. Just think about sex, instead—sex with someone you haven't had sex with yet. It works for me all the time."

"But what if I accidently think about sex with the wrong person, and then that's even worse?" Christ, I'm pathetic.

"Don't worry," she says, "you won't. Trust me, it works."

Mary. How did she get to be so wise? Perhaps it was when she discovered it's safest not to leave the house at all, if you can avoid it.

It took me a few minutes to stop feeling sorry for myself and start thinking about getting it on, but it was all downhill from there. So in the spirit of healing old wounds, making new friends, and most of all, telling other people how to behave, here's some advice of my own, from one clueless, brokenhearted punk rock girl to whoever the hell you are. Call them, um, dating tips?

1. Punk rockers are the cutest. Everyone knows this, because it's true. This is why ravers and pop stars steal our fashion, but always look boring or ridiculous. This is also why hippies and other weirdos on the street try to talk to punks as if they are on the same team, offering them green buds and so on. Punks will have none of this and respond, appropriately, with scorn.

So you should consider kissing punks, if at all possible. I oscillate a little bit about this issue (man, did I get a hard time a few years back when I went on a few dates with a clean-cut Phil Lynott fanatic. I defended myself eloquently then, but later had some doubts. He was nice and all, but... These days I only flirt reservedly with the non-punks.)

That's easy for me to say, says Mike Thorn, because there are sooo many eligible punk boys around and sooo few eligible punk girls. In theory, this is true, but really, it all depends on what you mean by *eligible*. I mean, come on. Besides, punk girls are the hottest shit there is. Even when I was a little pre-teen, sitting on AC Transit looking at some pretty girl in the seat across from me, I'd sometimes think, well, she's pretty cute, but she'd be a lot cuter if she had a sideways haircut and ripped tights. Now, I don't ride around objectifying women on public transportation anymore, I swear, but a punk girl will still always win an extra glance from me.

2. See point #1, above? That's not good enough by a long shot. The person you decide to kiss should also be both shameless and extremely courteous in bed. You can find this out pretty easily before you get there if you pay attention.

3. Never kiss someone you don't like. This is a very bad idea. Waste as little time as possible even in the presence of people you don't like, no matter how cute they are. Sounds obvious, perhaps, but never underestimate how devotedly we can lie to ourselves.

4. Try to lie to yourself as little as possible. Never lie to other people.

5. Go on dates. I didn't understand the concept of a date for years—didn't you already know everybody anyway? Well, yes, most of the time, but dates are fun anyway. If you're just in it for kicks, dates take the pressure off and give you something to be excited about. If you're more serious about it, don't you want to see your new pal in as many compromising positions as possible?

6. Take care of yourself. There's so much to be said about this particular point that I'll address it at length in a less scattered column some time in the future.

7. It's good to have a few good lines, I concede, if skeptically.

When Felix Von Havoc was staying here recently, in between salivating over the record collection, running errands, and snaking our sewage lines (shitworker for life!), he told me the best two pick-up lines he's ever heard:
1) "Wanna do some drugs?"
2) Q: What's there to do in this town? A. Me!
Sheesh.

OK, enough with the dating tips. I'll let you know if I ever learn anything else. But for now, take these final words of advice: Don't brood about it all day.

One more thing—recently, drinking out of paper bags on the 31 Balboa line with the punks, listening to the fucking Ramones, it suddenly occurred to me that there was a time, a while ago but not so long, when I didn't feel so comfortable or even really that safe with the people around me. Punk can be a cushioned lair for all kinds of vipers and bullies—used as an excuse for individual cruelty ("I'm so fucked up, I can't help my behavior") and crew-style violence. When you get used to that sense of danger, you can begin to feel like comfort and safety is a privilege enjoyed by other people. Just remember, this is all total bullshit and not what it should be about. You have a right to get out of any situation where you feel threatened, and to be treated with respect.

Here are better stories I intend to share with you real soon:
1. Meeting the bass player for Void in the record store
2. The MRR Anniversary Show Weekend
3. Annual Joey Ramone Drinking in the Streets Day

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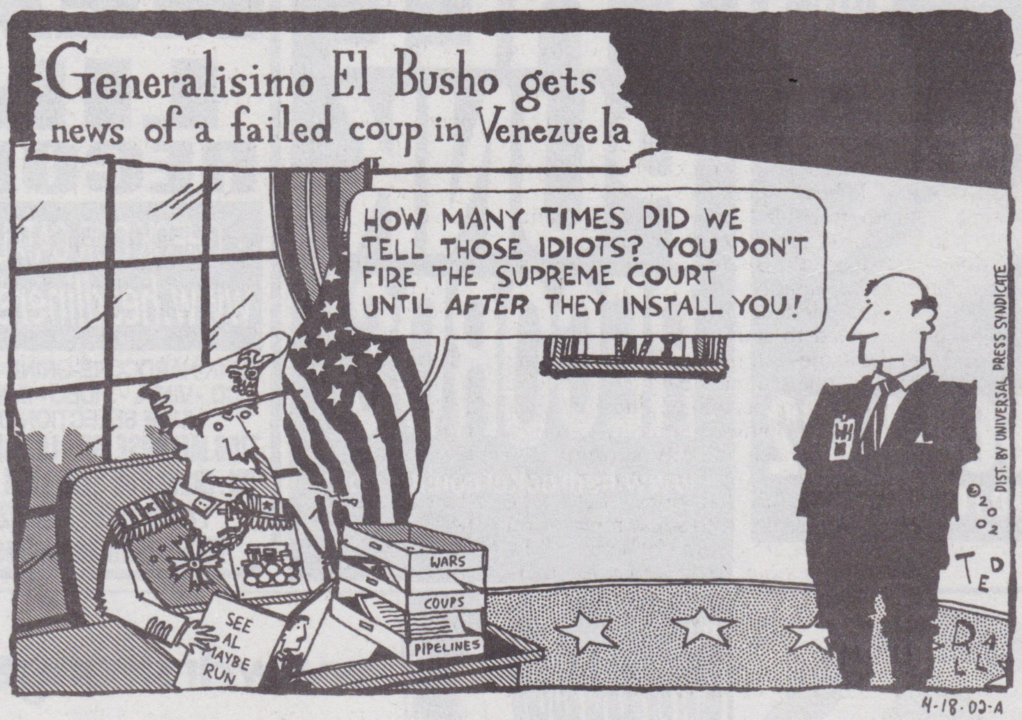

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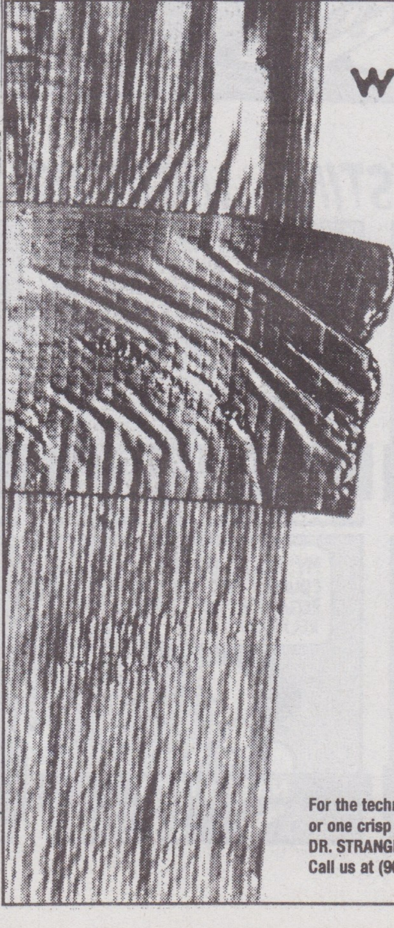

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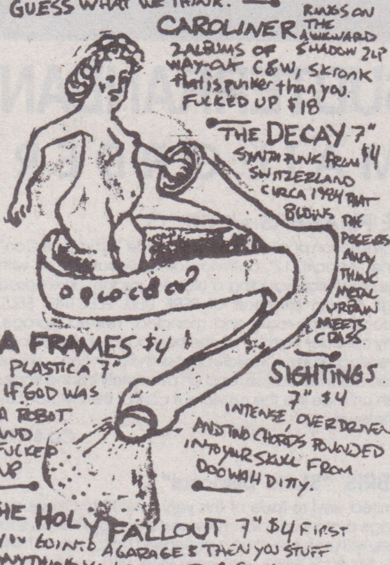

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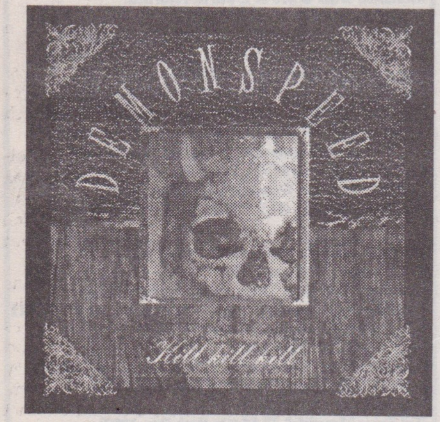

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MRR NEWS

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June 2002
compiled by:
Arwen Curry

On The Front Lines of a War on Dissent

Students prepare to protest anti-terrorism agenda as Bush and friends move to quash criticism of war

by William Walker
Published on Sunday, April 14, 2002 in the Toronto Star

Nineteen-year-old Naureen Shah has been called a "Taliban," a "Nazi" and "un-American."

Three of her classmates at Chicago's Northwestern University have been questioned by the FBI since the enactment of the Patriot Act, the US government's anti-terrorism legislation.

"I've been called all kinds of names," says Shah, a second-year journalism student. "But I think it's the Patriot Act that's un-American. I think broadening the war to a place like North Korea is un-American."

Her experience reflects an anti-dissent environment being fostered by law-enforcement agencies, the Republican administration and its right-wing friends in their robust campaign to quash criticism of the war on terrorism.

Shah will jump on a bus this week and travel with fellow students to Washington for the first major American protest against the war on terrorism and the US role in the Mideast crisis.

Organizers expect "tens of thousands" from across the country to march on the White House Saturday to demonstrate against a wider war on terrorism and what they call the "Bush-Sharon war against the Palestinian people."

Just as a university student-based opposition to the war begins to gel—more than 150 campuses in 40 states have held rallies urging US military restraint—it's becoming clear that there's also a war in America against dissent.

And it's being waged not just against students and professors, although universities are where the major skirmishes are taking place. Journalists, business people, even retirees have been targeted for speaking out. Some have been fired from their jobs, received hate mail or been made social outcasts for exercising their First Amendment right to freedom of speech.

Consider:

Barry Reingold, a 60-year-old retired telephone company worker in San Francisco, recently had two FBI agents visit his home to question him about criticism of the war on terrorism he voiced while working out at his local health club. The agents filed a report on him.

© halemo

Journalists Jackie Anderson of the Sun Advocate in Price, Utah; Dan Guthrie of the Grants Pass Daily Courier in Oregon; and Tom Gutting of the Texas City Sun have all been fired for writing columns questioning the war. In Washington, some senior White House and Capitol Hill reporters have been "frozen out" by lawmakers for expressing similar sentiments.

The Houston Art Car Museum had a recent visit from FBI and Secret Service agents who cited "several reports of anti-American activity going on here." The museum was showing Secret Wars, an anti-war exhibit set up before Sept. 11.

A.J. Brown, a freshman at Durham Tech in North Carolina, says two Secret Service agents knocked on her door to question her about "a report that you have un-American material in your apartment." They asked about a poster on her wall opposing the state of Texas' death penalty.

The campaign against dissent is being led by President George W. Bush, who has said repeatedly that "you're either with us, or you're against us." His press secretary, Ari Fleischer, has warned: "Americans need to watch what they say, watch what they do."

Attorney-General John Ashcroft, the FBI's boss, told Congress: "To those ... who scare peace-loving people with phantoms of lost liberty, my message is this: Your tactics only aid terrorists—for they erode our national unity and diminish our resolve. They give ammunition to America's enemies and pause to America's friends. They encourage people of goodwill to remain silent in the face of evil."

More than 90 per cent of Americans support military strikes in Afghanistan in response to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. But a CNN-USA Today Gallup poll found that only a slim majority of Americans—52 per cent of those surveyed—favour broadening the war to Iraq, North Korea or Iran, the nations that make up Bush's "axis of evil." Forty per cent of respondents prefer their government to target specific terrorist groups, rather than entire countries.

Given that Bush has stated his intention to broaden the war ("inaction is not an option" he said in regard to Iraq) and continue it through the remaining 2 1/2 years of his term, his government and its supporters are working hard to avoid a massive build-up of student opposition similar to the anti-Vietnam War movement of the late 1960s and early 70s.

Warned Bill Bennett, head of the right-wing Empower America organization, at a recent Washington news conference: "Professional and amateur critics of America are finding their voices. They're finding their voice on campuses, in salons, in learned societies and in the print media and on television."

Anti-war protests are nothing new in the US, which has always had its dissenters. But it wasn't until the Vietnam War that student radicalism in America hit its peak, culminating in the May 4, 1970, riot at Kent State University in which Ohio National Guardsmen shot and killed four student demonstrators.

These days, however, it's unfashionable to be an anti-war crusader on US college campuses. There has been virtual unanimity on the need to eradicate Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda terrorist group from Afghanistan, but students are beginning to mobilize against Bush's pledge to fight the war over several more years, in several countries, in the name of stamping out terrorism.

Bennett, a staunch Republican who served as education secretary in the Ronald Reagan administration and "drug czar" under George Bush Sr., has joined former CIA director James Woolsey and Reagan assistant secretary of defence Frank Gaffney in founding Americans For Victory Over Terrorism, a group that intends to visit campuses and conduct pro-war "teach-ins."anwhile, Lynne Cheney, wife of Vice-President Dick Cheney, has helped organize a group called the American Council on Trustees and Alumni (ACTA), which cites a "blame America first" bias among hundreds of professors and is monitoring their anti-war statements.

In what many professors view as a threat to their academic freedoms, ACTA is sending mass mailings to alumni of schools where "offensive" comments have been made, urging donations be cut off and pressuring university trustees to take action. One Florida professor, who didn't have the protection of being tenured, has already been fired.

"It's your constitutional right to criticize," Bennett told educators. "But when you criticize, you take the consequences for your words. Your words may be responded to and your words can be interpreted in such ways that they hurt the national resolve."

The American Civil Liberties Union and other national organizations have decried the Bush administration's Patriot Act for giving the FBI vast powers to intercept Americans' conversations, cellphone calls and e-mails, even to eavesdrop on talks between lawyers and their clients.

Of course, the FBI has a long history of pushing the privacy envelope.

In the mid-1950s, the late FBI director J. Edgar Hoover launched COINTELPRO, an enormous domestic surveillance program to monitor the Communist party in the United States. Within a decade, it was expanded to include the Socialist Workers party, the Black Panthers and Nation of Islam groups and eventually most of the community and religious organizations that became known as the New Left.

"Whatever kind of intellectual climate we have is, I think, being slowly starved," says Jensen. "It's like we're saying to people, `You shouldn't think. You should listen to the people in power and, if they say we should go to war, we should go to war.' That's what disturbs me."

Bush, he adds, has "announced an unlimited war against a potentially endless enemy. Do they understand the consequences of a war the secretary of defence has said has no `exit strategies' and will be a `sustained engagement that carries no deadlines?'"

Jensen says Bennett's organization and Lynne Cheney's ACTA seem to believe universities are still run "by leftover hippies, some pot-smoking intellectual commies. But there's nothing further from the truth.

"The sense one had that, in the 60s and 70s, universities were centres of intellectual engagement has largely been lost. I'd call that a threat to democracy.

"All over the world, in Canada and in Europe, people are dealing with these complexities. But here, we're just not."

Back at Northwestern, Shah has high hopes for Saturday's march on the White House.

"This is the first protest that is going to unite several different causes," she says.

"Our opposition to the war is no joke. It's based on facts. We want to draw together concerns about globalization issues, the Middle East and NAFTA, to make the connections to the war on terrorism. We don't feel that's been properly done until now.

"I don't see the possibility of a larger student movement unless we begin to understand how the war affects us all directly. But the basis is there. It might happen yet."

ANTI-ABORTIONISTS BUOYED BY NEW ALLIES IN THE WHITE HOUSE

Duncan Campbell in Los Angeles, The Guardian

Abortion rights activists are afraid that the Bush administration is making a concerted attack on the right to abortion by exploring new ways to install anti-abortion judges and challenge existing rights through the courts.

Abortion is now likely to be a key issue in the elections throughout the US later this year.

Last week President Bush told a Republican fundraising lunch that it was important to get "good conservative judges appointed to the bench and approved by the United States Senate."

He added that it was important that Republicans were elected to the Senate "to make sure that the judges do what they're supposed to do."

The president was angered last month when the Senate judiciary committee rejected Charles Pickering as his choice for the fifth circuit court, which covers Texas, Mississippi, and Louisiana. As a Mississippi state legislator, Mr. Pickering had led Republican party efforts to introduce a constitutional amendment banning abortion.

The National Abortion Rights Action League (Naral) has told its supporters that the changed political climate since the Clinton years could roll back years of abortion reform.

"Bush opposes the right to choose and John Ashcroft [the attorney general] has a lifelong record of opposition to the right to choose, so we are very concerned," William Lutz of Naral said. "We're watching the judicial pipeline like a hawk."

A single new appointment to the finely balanced supreme court could result in it overturning the 1973 Roe v Wade decision, which established the right to an abortion.

The biggest US anti-abortion group, the National Right to Life Campaign (NRLC), has hailed Mr. Bush as a champion of their cause.

Its political action director, Caril Tobias, said: "I have no doubt we're going to win. Young people are turning to us and we know there will be new troops. We are committed to saving the babies."

She said the difference between Mr. Bush and Mr. Clinton was highly significant. "I don't think there's any way to measure the value of having them [Bush and Ashcroft] in charge."

In the coming elections, she said: "Certainly abortion is going to be an issue."

Abortion as a political issue still divides the country. While President Bush enjoys an 80% approval rating, the support for his position on abortion is less than 50%.

In an election year, with governorships at stake in more than 30 states, the issue is already prominent. Because governors appoint judges they can have a big impact on rulings on the legality of abortion.

The provision for abortion varies widely from state to state. California, Washington and New York, for example, have a liberal provision, while in North Dakota there is only one place where abortions are performed.

Last month the Kansas state legislature voted to ask the state supreme court to declare that life begins at conception. Anti-abortionists hope this will lead to a ruling that a fetus has constitutional rights, which would make all abortion illegal in the state, regardless of the circumstances.

Currently 25 states fund abortion only for victims of rape or incest or those whose lives are endangered. In 2000, 21 governors signed anti-abortion legislation.

Bari v. FBI Trial Underway

reprinted from SF IndyMedia

After years of appeals and a campaign of disinformation by the FBI and Oakland Police Department, the lawsuit filed against those agencies by Judi Bari and Darryl Cherney finally opened April 8 in an Oakland Federal Courthouse. The plaintiffs are suing the FBI and Oakland Police under the 1st, 4th, and 5th amendments for conspiracy, false arrest, unlawful search and seizure, interfering with their right to organize politically, and denying equal protection of the law in allowing the real assassins to go free.

"CATASTROPHIC THREAT" FROM WORLD'S MOUNTAIN LAKES, WARNS UN

by Daniel Nelson
Published by OneWorld.net Global Warming

Scores of mountain lakes may burst their banks in the next 10 years because of global warming, sending millions of gallons of floodwaters swirling down valleys and endangering tens of thousands of lives, scientists warned Tuesday.

Research released today by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) shows that lakes in the Himalayas are rapidly filling with icy water as rising temperatures accelerate the melting of glaciers and snowfields.

The agency pinpointed 24 glacial lakes in Nepal and 24 in Bhutan "that have become potentially dangerous" due to a regional increase in average air temperatures of 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit since the 1970s.

"We have evidence that any of these lakes in Nepal and Bhutan could, unless urgent action is taken, burst its banks in as little as five years time with potentially catastrophic results for people and property hundreds of kilometers downstream," said Surendra Shrestha, regional coordinator for UNEP's early warning division.

"These are the ones we know about. Who knows how many others, elsewhere in the Himalayas and across the world, are in a similar critical state?" Shrestha added, noting that since less than 10 percent of the Himalayan region had been assessed, there could be areas where the risk is great but as yet unknown. Surveys were planned for China, Pakistan, and Central Asia.

Work is already under way to lower the level of one of the Nepali lakes considered most at risk, according to Pradeep Mool, a remote-sensing expert with the International Center for Integrated Mountain Development, which carried out the research with UNEP.

As a result of the melting of a nearby glacier, he said, the Tsho Rolpa Lake had grown from 0.23 square kilometers in the late 1950s to 1.4 square kilometers today. A flood could inflict serious damage as far as the village of Tribeni, some 108 kilometers away, threatening about 10,000 people. Engineers were working to lower its level by 30 meters, and a network of sensors and sirens had been linked from the lake to villages at risk from its floodwaters.

UNEP experts say millions of dollars are urgently needed to carry out similar work on scores of other glacial lakes if disasters are to be averted. Mool emphasized that although glacial lake bursts were not a new phenomenon, there was evidence that they had been occurring more frequently in the past 30 years, the period during which glaciers had been retreating faster than ever before in recorded history.

The warning about glacial lakes coincides with a meeting this week of a UN-sponsored body, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, that in the last four years has played a key role in confirming the existence of "new and stronger evidence" that most of the global warming observed over the last 50 years is attributable to human activities, such as the burning of oil.

"Greenhouse gases," such as naturally-produced carbon-dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide, along with artificially-generated hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride, had been at the center of a fierce debate over whether the Earth's natural cooling system was being directly slowed down by a range of industrial processes.

Speaking on the eve of the April 17-20 meeting in Geneva, the 19th meeting of the Panel, Klaus Toepfer, UNEP's executive director, said, "Climate change is the biggest threat facing humankind, with extreme weather events, droughts and rises in disease forecast for many parts of the globe over the coming decades."

"If...glaciers continue to retreat at the rates being seen in places like the Himalayas, then many rivers and freshwater systems could run dry, threatening drinking water supplies as well as fisheries and wildlife," said Toepfer. "We now have another compelling reason to act to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases."

Bush Predicts More Terrorism

By Ron Fournier Lexington, VA (AP)

President Bush said Wednesday the United States is still waging war "day by day, terrorist by terrorist," and warned that the spring thaw in Afghanistan could unearth pockets of al-Qaida fighters seeking to violently undercut the fledging government.

Amid fresh questions about the whereabouts of terrorist mastermind Osama bin Laden, the commander in chief told military school cadets, "Wherever global terrorism threatens the civilized world, we and our friends and allies will respond—and we'll respond decisively."

He said pointedly that the Taliban government was "the first regime to fall" in the US-led war against terrorism. Bush did not say what nation might be next, but his address to the Virginia Military Institute contained thinly veiled references to Saddam Hussein's Iraq, as well as Iran and North Korea.

Billed as an update on the war against terrorism, the address came as Secretary of State Colin Powell completed his Middle East peace mission with no cease-fire. Bush cast the bloody Israeli-Palestinian standoff as another front in the global anti-terrorism conflict.

"Every leader, every state must choose between two separate paths: the path of peace or the path of terror," Bush said of the region.

He has used similar with-us-or-against-us language to define the broader war on terrorism, which began in October after bin Laden's Afghanistan-based al-Qaida network was linked to the Sept. 11 attacks.

In the address, Bush highlighted the arrest of a top bin Laden associate, Abu Zubaydah, even as new evidence emerged that the U.S.-led coalition let bin Laden himself escape during the battle for Tora Bora late last year.

"He's under lock and key and we're going to give him some company," Bush said of Zubaydah.

Bush, who enjoys high public support for his wartime leadership, listed accomplishments in the first phase of the war in Afghanistan: "We're clearing minefields, we're rebuilding roads, we're improving medical care and we'll work to help Afghanistan develop an economy that can feed its people without feeding the world's demands for drugs."

"We're making good progress, yet it's important for Americans to know this war will not be quick and this war will not be easy," he said. "Our progress is measured day by day, terrorist by terrorist."

Citing intelligence gathered from the laptop computers, maps and drawings seized as US forces scoured al-Qaida hide-outs in Afghanistan, Bush issued a warning about the potential for more attacks:

"As the spring thaw comes, we expect cells of trained killers to try to regroup to murder, create mayhem and try to undermine Afghanistan's efforts to build a lasting peace."

The speech broke no new ground, and Bush looked tired. The loudest applause came when the president absolved cadets of minor offenses at school. Commanders in chief traditionally grant amnesty while visiting military schools.

Bush said the second phase of the war will require a global response against any nation that harbors or helps terrorists. He renewed his pledge to take action against "outlaw regimes" that traffic in weapons of mass destruction and deal with terrorists.

Without a specific mention of Iraq, Iran or North Korea, Bush said: "These regimes constitute an axis of evil and the world must confront them."

42 Philadelphia Schools Privatized

By David B. Caruso / Philadelphia (AP)

Forty-two of the city's low-performing middle and elementary schools have been privatized, part of a sweeping management change that makes for-profit firms and universities responsible for educating thousands of children.

The School Reform Commission, created by the state after it seized control of the city's public school system in December, voted 3-2 Wednesday in favor of the plan, which affects more than one-quarter of the city's schools.

The decision turns over 20 schools to a for-profit company, Edison Schools Inc., and places another 50 in the hands of other private firms, non-profits and parent groups. The changes could be in place by September.

The decision came over the objections of unions, students and some parents who argue that companies like Edison have an unproven track record. No high schools would be handed over to private entities.

"I am greatly concerned that the magnitude of the change being proposed is too ambitious at this point," said commissioner Michael Masch. Commissioner Sandra Dungee Glenn said Edison had "a mixed record of performance at best," and should be given a more limited role.

Those concerns were overridden by the three commissioners appointed by Gov. Mark Schweiker? Edison's biggest backer in Pennsylvania. Mayor John F. Street, who appointed the two dissenting commission members, said he accepted the decision.

Daniel Whelan, a school reform commissioner, said the schools are in immediate need of aggressive reform. "If anything, we erred on the side of caution," he said.

About two dozen students spent the night before the vote camped outside the city's school administration building, then formed a human chain across its wrought-iron gate and refused to allow anyone inside.

Andrew Hopkins, a 16-year-old student at Simon Gratz High School, said he was willing to go to jail to make a political point.

"It's worth it. We are talking about our education here. They shouldn't be giving these schools to private companies that care mostly about their own profits," he said. "We want a parent vote in every school they want to take over."

The commission decided to postpone the meeting for two hours and move it to another building several blocks away rather than make a forced entry.

After the vote, commission chairman James Nevels called it "a historic day" for Philadelphia. Its public school system is the nation's seventh largest, with 200,000 students in 265 schools and a $1.7 billion annual budget.

The system's new private partners will be moving into schools where 80 percent of the students qualify for free or reduced-cost meals and more than half score in the bottom quarter on state reading and math tests.

The commission said it would bring in seven groups to operate 42 schools. Besides Edison, the for-profit firm Chancellor Beacon Academies would run five school and Victory Schools would run three.

Three of the city's biggest universities—Temple, the University of Pennsylvania and Drexel—would get a share of 12 schools. Universal Cos. would run two schools.

Edison Schools was picked to act as lead consultant in districtwide reforms. Its schools feature a longer day and school year, a heavy investment in technology and intensive staff development. The company runs 136 schools in 23 states.

IRAQ WAR: THE COMING DISASTER

by Immanuel Wallerstein
Published in the Los Angeles Times

NEW HAVEN—George W. Bush is a geopolitical incompetent. He has allowed a clique of hawks to induce him to take a position on invading Iraq from which he cannot extract himself, one which will have nothing but negative consequences for the United States—and the rest of the world. He will find himself badly hurt politically, perhaps fatally. And he will rapidly diminish the already declining power of the United States in the world. A war against Iraq will destroy many lives immediately, both Iraqi and American, because it seems clear that high-altitude, surgical-strike air attacks will not suffice in military terms. Invading Iraq will lead to a degree of turmoil in the Arab-Islamic world hitherto unimagined. Other Arab leaders don't like Saddam Hussein one bit, but their populations won't stand for what they will inevitably feel is an unprovoked attack on an Arab state, leaving leaders with little choice but to be swept along in the turmoil or drown. And an attack on Iraq might ultimately spark the use of nuclear weapons, which, if unleashed now, will be hard to again make illegitimate. Iraq may not have such weapons yet, but we can't be sure. Even if it doesn't, might it not attack Israel with conventional missiles that would prompt Israel to respond with the nuclear weapons we know it has? For that matter, are we really sure that, if the fighting gets tough, the US is not ready to use tactical nuclear weapons?

How have we gotten into such a disastrous cul-de-sac?

It seems probable that US military action against Iraq is now not a question of whether but of when. The US government insists action is necessary because Iraq has been defying United Nations resolutions and represents an imminent danger to the world in general, and to the US in particular. This explanation of the expected military action is so thin that it cannot be taken seriously. Defying UN resolutions or other international enjoinders has been commonplace for the last 50 years. I need hardly remind anyone that the US refused to defer to a 1986 World Court decision condemning US actions in Nicaragua. And President Bush has made it amply clear that he will not honor any treaty should he think it dangerous to US interests. Israel has, of course, been defying UN resolutions for more than 30 years, and is doing so again as I write this commentary. And the record of other UN members is not much better. So Hussein has been defying quite explicit UN resolutions. What else is new?

Is Hussein an imminent threat to anyone? In August 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait. That action, at least, did pose an imminent threat. The US response was the Persian Gulf War, in which we pushed the Iraqis out of Kuwait and then decided to stop there—for good military and political reasons. But that left Hussein in power.

The UN passed various resolutions requiring Iraq to abandon nuclear, chemical and bacteriological weapons and mandated inspection teams to verify that it had done so. The UN also put in place a variety of embargoes against Iraq. As we know, over the decade since then, the system of constraints on Iraq put in place by these UN resolutions has weakened considerably, but not totally by any means.

Several weeks ago, Iraq and Kuwait signed an agreement in which Iraq agreed to respect the sovereignty of Kuwait. The foreign minister of Kuwait, Sheik Sabah al Ahmed al Jabbar al Sabah said his country is now "100% satisfied," adding that he had written the agreement himself. A spokesperson for the United States nonetheless exhibited skepticism. The US is not about to be deterred simply because Kuwait is "satisfied." What is Kuwait, that it should participate in such a decision?

US hawks believe that only the use of force—very significant force—will restore our unquestioned hegemony in the world. It is no doubt true that the use of overwhelming force can establish hegemony, as happened with the United States in 1945. But US hegemony is not what it once was. The country's economic superiority in the world between 1945 and 1965 has been replaced with a situation in which the US economic position is not significantly better than that of the European Union or Japan. This relative economic decline has cost the US the unquestioned political deference of its close allies. All that is left is military superiority. And, as Machiavelli taught us all centuries ago, force is not enough: If that's all you have, then its use is a sign of weakness rather than of strength and weakens the user.

It is clear that, at this point, almost no one supports a US invasion of Iraq: not a single Arab state, not Turkey or Iran or Pakistan, not Russia or the great bulk of Europe. There are, to be sure, two notable exceptions: Israel, which is cheering Bush on, and Great Britain—or rather its prime minister, Tony Blair, who declared last weekend in Texas that "doing nothing ... is not an option" with regard to Iraq. Yet an article in The Observer last month reported that "Britain's military leaders issued a stark warning to Tony Blair last night that any war against Iraq is doomed to fail and would lead to the loss of lives for little political gain."

I cannot believe that US military leaders have drawn a different conclusion, although they may be more wary of stating that unpleasant truth to President Bush. Kenneth M. Pollack, formerly of the CIA and the Iraq specialist on Clinton's National Security Council, says military action in Iraq would require sending in 200,000 to 300,000 US troops, presumably from bases in either Saudi Arabia or Kuwait, as well as additional troops to defend the Kurds in northern Iraq.

The US seems to be counting on intimidating its allies into going along. But after Israel's occupation of West Bank cities, the remote hope that Saudi (or even Kuwaiti) bases would be made available to US troops has almost surely disappeared. Turkey clearly has no interest in defending Iraqi Kurds, since such action would certainly strengthen the Kurdish movement in Turkey, against which the Turkish government fights with all its energy. As for Israel, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon—with Bush's strong support—is in the process of destroying as rapidly as possible the Palestinian Authority, which certainly won't help Bush build his anti-Iraq coalition.

Still, there will be an invasion, which will be difficult if not impossible to win. The action could well become another Vietnam. Just as in Vietnam, the war will drag on and will cost many US lives. And the political effects will be so negative for the US that eventually Bush (or his successor) will pull out. A renewed and amplified Vietnam syndrome will be the result at home.

Can no one in the Bush administration see this? A few, no doubt, but they are being ignored, because Bush is in a self-imposed dilemma. If he goes ahead with the Iraq invasion, he risks bringing himself down, like Lyndon Johnson. And a US failure would finally give the Europeans the courage to be European and not Atlantic. But those negative consequences to Bush would be in the future, whereas the negatives of not invading are immediate.

Bush promised the US people a "war on terrorism" that "we will certainly win." So far, all he's produced is the downfall of the weak and impoverished Taliban. He hasn't captured Bin Laden. Pakistan is shaky. Saudi Arabia is pulling away. If he doesn't invade Iraq, he will look foolish where it matters to him most—in the eyes of American voters. And he is being told this, in no uncertain terms, by his advisors on internal US politics. Bush's incredibly high approval ratings reflect his being a "war president." The minute he becomes a peace-time president, he will be in grave trouble—all the more so because of failed wartime promises.

So, Bush has no choice. He will invade Iraq. He has made clear that the current Middle East crisis will not deter him from this. Quite the opposite. Sending Secretary of State Colin Powell to the region is a way of trying to ensure the operation. And we shall all live with the consequences.

Immanuel Wallerstein is senior research scholar at Yale University and the author of "The End of the World as We Know It."

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UNDERMINING DEMOCRACY IN VENEZUELA

by Franz Schneiderman
Published in the Baltimore Sun

It's a sad day for American democracy when the leaders of countries whose human rights records and democratic practices are as deeply flawed as those of Paraguay and Peru show more respect for democratic institutions and the rule of law than the US government demonstrates. But that's what happened last weekend, after elements of Venezuela's military led a coup that briefly ousted the country's elected president, Hugo Chavez.

Mr. Chavez's return to office is a triumph for his country's embattled democratic institutions and for the popularly elected leaders who stood behind his government. But the affair was a black eye for the Bush administration, which strained US ties to allies in the region by backing the coup and will now have little credibility as an advocate for democracy in the Americas.

After strikes and unrest forced Mr. Chavez out of office April 11, a so-called interim government headed by businessman Pedro Carmona imprisoned the elected president, arrested other top government officials, dismissed the National Constituent Assembly and supreme court and suspended the constitution that the nation's voters had endorsed just two years ago. The unrest apparently was organized by factions of the country's military and financial elites determined to oust Mr. Chavez.

Countries throughout the hemisphere quickly condemned the coup, with the sharpest denunciations from nations such as Paraguay, Argentina and Peru, which have endured great brutality under military dictatorships. The Organization of American States denounced "the alteration of the constitutional order in Venezuela" and refused to recognize the regime.

But the tone was very different in Washington.

The Bush administration refused to call a coup a coup. White House spokesman Ari Fleischer referred instead to "a combustible situation in which Chavez resigned." The administration expressed support for Mr. Carmona as it unsuccessfully lobbied the OAS to tone down its criticism of his regime.

Indeed, a report by *The New York Times* that leaders of the coup recently met with senior Bush administration officials, who backed the Venezuelans' belief that Mr. Chavez should be removed, will fuel rampant suspicions in Latin America that the Colossus of the North was behind the overthrow.

With its class-conscious rhetoric of social revolution and friendly relationships with Cuba and OPEC colleagues such as Iran and Iraq, the Chavez government long has been a thorn in President Bush's side.

Mr. Chavez's sometimes strident rhetoric and egotistical style have sharpened some of his nation's divisions. And as Venezuela's economy weakened over the last year under the weight of falling oil prices and questionable economic policies, Mr. Chavez's once-overwhelming popularity has waned, and unrest increased, in a country that is the third-largest exporter of oil to the United States.

While all of this is cause for concern, the intensity of the Bush administration's hostility to Mr. Chavez is unwarranted.

Although he's chummy with Fidel Castro, Mr. Chavez is no socialist. He's an economic nationalist whose economic policies are much more reminiscent of Juan Peron's Argentina than Mr. Castro's Cuba.

And Mr. Chavez didn't introduce class divisions to Venezuela. In fact, he was elected to address them. Despite the country's tremendous oil resources, more than 80 percent of Venezuelans are considered poor and many eke out marginal lives in the sprawling slums that surround the nation's cities.

Large majorities twice elected Mr. Chavez president, giving him a strong mandate to help the nation's poor and break the stranglehold of the two corrupt political parties that have dominated Venezuelan politics for decades. Despite his mistakes, Mr. Chavez remains a powerful symbol of hope for many of his nation's poor. And the democratic institutions the coup threatened are deeply valued, even by many in Venezuela and throughout Latin America who oppose Mr. Chavez's policies.

Peru's President Alejandro Toledo, who is no friend of Mr. Chavez's, explained his country's opposition to the coup like this: "We are not defending the democratic characteristics of a particular government, we are defending the principle of the rule of law."

Most Americans might have thought the leaders of a country proud of its more than 200-year tradition of constitutional rule and eager to see itself as a beacon for democracy would respect such basic democratic principles.

But in the case of the Bush administration's policy on Venezuela, as in so many other cases in the blood-dimmed history of US-Latin American relations, they would be sadly mistaken.

Franz Schneiderman edits The Sun's letters page.

AMNESTY BLASTS U.S. OVER DETAINEES IN AFGHANISTAN AND CUBA

Published by Agence France Presse

Amnesty International published a report hitting out at violations of the rights of prisoners being held by the US army in Cuba and Afghanistan.

"The USA's 'pick and choose' approach to the Geneva Convention is unacceptable, as is its failure to respect fundamental international human rights standards," the organization said Monday in the 62-page document, which was sent to the US government earlier.

Amnesty repeated its request to Washington to be allowed to visit the prisoners held in Afghanistan and at the US Guantanamo base in Cuba where some 300 alleged members of the terrorist group al-Qaeda or the Afghan Taliban were sent.

A previous request sent to the US government in January came to nothing, the London-based human rights organization said.

In its report, Amnesty again accused the United States of failing to grant the detainees rights that are universally recognized for any suspect placed in provisional detention.

It denounced the American authorities' failure to give the detainees prisoner of war status, to grant them access to a lawyer or to bring them before a competent tribunal as laid down in the Geneva Conventions.

"The US government must ensure that all its actions in relation to those in its custody in Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay comply with international law and standards," Amnesty International wrote.

"This is crucial if justice is to be done and seen to be done, and if respect for the rule of law and human rights is not to be undermined."

AFGHAN KING RETURNS TO AFGHANISTAN

By Niko Price, Afghanistan (AP) excerpted

Former King Mohammad Zaher Shah returned to Afghanistan on Thursday after 29 years in exile marked at home by war, poverty and fanaticism. Thousands of joyous Afghans lined the streets to welcome their frail former monarch, in whom they have placed their hopes for a peaceful future.

At Kabul's bombed-out airport, an honor guard saluted and spectators applauded as the 87 year-old Zaher Shah, dressed simply in a brown leather jacket, stepped off an Italian military aircraft and walked down a red carpet with Afghanistan's interim prime minister, Hamid Karzai.

Few observers expect the frail former king to be more than a benevolent father figure for a traumatized nation. But the symbolism of his presence is important. In June, he will convene a loya jirga, a grand national assembly of tribal elders and other Afghan representatives, who will select a new government to rule Afghanistan until elections in late 2003.

SOUTH AFRICA DROPS AIDS DRUG OBJECTIONS

Mungo Soggot , The Guardian

The South African government has dropped its controversial hardline stance on Aids drugs, unveiling new plans to provide anti-retroviral medication at state hospitals.

Aids activists welcomed the u-turn yesterday, which follows mounting pressure on President Thabo Mbeki and his government to rethink their policies.

Announcing the plans after a cabinet meeting, the government for the first time clearly acknowledged that anti-retroviral drugs can help prevent transmission of the disease.

The government has decided that rape victims will now be entitled to the therapy to reduce the chance of transmission of the virus. It has also pledged to provide the anti-retroviral drug nevirapine to pregnant HIV-positive women— perhaps as early as December this year.

FRESH EVIDENCE OF JENIN ATROCITIES

by Phil Reeves in Jerusalem, Published in the Independent/UK

Evidence of atrocities by Israeli troops in Jenin refugee camp grew yesterday when a British pathologist said he found "highly suspicious" wounds during the first autopsy on a victim.

Derrick Pounder, professor of forensic medicine at Dundee University, who is working with Amnesty International, visited the ruined camp and said: "Claims that a large number of civilians died and are under the rubble are highly credible. It is not believable that only a few people have been killed, given the reports we have that a large number of people were inside three and four-storey buildings when they were demolished."

The autopsy on the 38-year-old Palestinian revealed that "he was either shot in the foot, and then in the back, or shot in the back first—receiving a fatal wound—and his corpse was for some reason shot in the foot," he said. "Whichever order the shots occurred in, it was highly suspicious."

As the US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, left for America yesterday, having failed to secure a cease-fire, international fury was growing over events at Jenin. The camp, home to 13,500 refugees, was stormed by Israeli forces a fortnight ago in what Mr. Sharon called a counter-terrorism operation against Palestinian militants. The furore has severely damaged Israel's international standing, sending it to its lowest point for several decades.

Palestinians who survived the long battle—in which Israeli helicopters fired rockets and machine-guns into a densely populated area—have said the Israeli army committed many atrocities. Witnesses have described people being shot as they surrendered; houses being bulldozed with people inside; the use of human shields; the burial of 32 bodies in a trench, and one case of Israeli soldiers turning on the household gas supply before tossing a stun grenade into a room full of people.

Richard Cook, head of operations for Unrwa—the UN agency for Palestinian refugees—visited the camp yesterday. He said: "I was absolutely appalled. I anticipated it to a degree but the devastation was much greater than I expected."

The Foreign Office said "disproportionate and excessive" force had been used by Israel, and "clearly civilians were not properly protected."

FEAR AND LEARNING IN AMERICA

by Robert Fisk

Published in the Independent/UK

Osama bin Laden once told me that Americans did not understand the Middle East. Last week, in a little shuttle bus shouldering its way through curtains of rain across the Iowa prairies, I opened my copy of the *Des Moines Register* and realized that he might be right. "BIG HOG LOTS CALLED GREATER THREAT THAN BIN LADEN," announced the headline. Iowa's 15 million massive pigs, it seems, produce so much manure that the state waterways are polluted. "Large-scale hog producers are a greater threat to the United States and US democracy than Osama bin Laden and his terrorist network, says Robert F Kennedy Junior, president of... a New York environment group... 'We've watched communities and American values shattered by these bullies,' Kennedy said..." I took out my pocket calculator and did a little maths. Cedar Rapids, I reckoned, was 7,000 miles from Afghanistan. Another planet, more like.

I've been traveling to the United States for years, lecturing at Princeton or Harvard or Brown University, Rhode Island, or San Francisco, or Madison, Wisconsin. God knows why. I refuse all payment and take just a business-class round trip from Beirut because I can't take 14 hours of screaming babies in each direction. American college students are tough as nails and bored as cabbages, and in some cities—Washington is top of the list—I might as well talk in Amharic. If you don't use phrases like "peace process," "back on track," or "Israel under siege," there's a kind of computerized blackout on the faces of the audience. Total Disk Failure. Why should my latest bout of Americana have been any different?

Sure, there were the usual oddballs. There was the old black guy whose first "question" on the Middle East in a Chicago University lecture theater was a long and proud announcement that he hadn't paid taxes to the IRS since 1948—a claim so wonderful that I forbore the usual threat to close down on him. There were the World Trade Center conspiracists who insisted that the US government had planted explosives in the twin towers. There was the silver-haired lady who wanted to know why God couldn't be made to resolve the hatred between Israelis and Palestinians. And a Native American Indian in Los Angeles who ranted on about a Jewish plot to deprive his people of their land. A bespectacled man with long white hair in a ponytail shut him up before declaring that the Israeli-Palestinian war was identical to the American-Mexican war that deprived his own people of... well, of Los Angeles. I began to calculate the distance between LA and Jenin. A galaxy perhaps.

And there were the little tell-tale stories that showed just how biased and gutless the American press has become in the face of America's Israeli lobby groups. "I wrote a report for a major paper about the Palestinian exodus of 1948," a Jewish woman told me as we drove through the smog of downtown LA. "And of course, I mentioned the massacre of Palestinians at Deir Yassin by the Stern Gang and other Jewish groups—the massacre that prompted 750,000 Arabs to flee their homes. Then I look for my story in the paper and what do I find? The word 'alleged' has been inserted before the word 'massacre'. I called the paper's ombudsman and told him the massacre at Deir Yassin was a historical fact. Can you guess his reply? He said that the editor had written the word 'alleged' before 'massacre' because that way he thought he'd avoid lots of critical letters."

By chance, this was the theme of my talks and lectures: the cowardly, idle, spineless way in which American journalists are lobotomizing their stories from the Middle East, how the "occupied territories" have become "disputed territories" in their reports, how Jewish "settlements" have been transformed into Jewish "neighborhoods," how Arab militants are "terrorists" but Israeli militants only "fanatics" or "extremists," how Ariel Sharon—the man held "personally responsible" by Israel's own commissioner's inquiry for the 1982 Sabra and Chatila massacre of 1,700 Palestinians—could be described in a report in The New York Times as having the instincts of "a warrior." How the execution of surviving Palestinian fighters was so often called "mopping up." How civilians killed by Israeli soldiers were always "caught in the crossfire." I demanded to know of my audiences—and I expected the usual American indignation when I did—how US citizens could accept the infantile "dead or alive," "with us or against us," axis-of-evil policies of their President.

And for the first time in more than a decade of lecturing in the United States, I was shocked. Not by the passivity of Americans—the all-accepting, patriotic notion that the President knows best—nor by the dangerous self-absorption of the United States since 11 September and the constant, all-consuming fear of criticizing Israel. What shocked me was the extraordinary new American refusal to go along with the official line, the growing, angry awareness among Americans that they were being lied to and deceived. At some of my talks, 60 percent of the audiences were over 40. In some cases, perhaps 80 percent were Americans with no ethnic or religious roots in the Middle East—"American Americans," as I cruelly referred to them on one occasion, "white Americans," as a Palestinian student called them more truculently. For the first time, it wasn't my lectures they objected to, but the lectures they received from their President and the lectures they read in their press about Israel's "war on terror" and the need always, uncritically, to support everything that America's little Middle Eastern ally says and does.

There was, for example, the crinkly-faced, ex-naval officer who approached me after a talk at a United Methodist church in the San Diego suburb of Encinitas. "Sir, I was an officer on the aircraft carrier John F Kennedy during the 1973 Middle East war," he began. (I checked him out later and he was, as my host remarked, "for real.") "We were stationed off Gibraltar and our job was to refuel the fighter jets we were sending to Israel after their air force was shot to bits by the Arabs. Our planes would land with their USAF and Marine markings partly stripped off and the Star of David already painted on the side. Does anyone know why we gave all those planes to the Israelis just like that? When I see on television our planes and our tanks used to attack Palestinians, I can understand why people hate Americans."

In the United States, I'm used to lecturing in half-empty lecture halls. Three years ago, I managed to fill a Washington auditorium seating 600 with just 32 Americans. But in Chicago and Iowa and Los Angeles this month, they came in their hundreds—almost 900 at one venue at the University of Southern California—and they sat in the aisles and corridors and outside the doors. It wasn't because Lord Fisk was in town. Maybe the title of my talk—"September 11: ask who did it, but for heaven's sake don't ask why"—was provocative. But for the most part they came, as the question-and-answer sessions quickly revealed, because they were tired of being suckered by the television news networks and the right-wing punditocracy.

Never before have I been asked by Americans: "How can we make our press report the Middle East fairly?" or—much more disturbingly—"How can we make our government reflect our views?" The questions are a trap, of course. Brits have been shoving advice at the United States ever since we lost the War of Independence, and I wasn't going to join their number. But the fact that these questions could be asked—usually by middle-aged Americans with no family origins in the Middle East—suggested a profound change in a hitherto docile population.

Towards the end of each talk, I apologized for the remarks I was about to make. I told audiences that the world did not change on 11 September, that the Lebanese and Palestinians had lost 17,500 dead during Israel's 1982 invasion—more than five times the death toll of the international crimes against humanity of 11 September—but the world did not change 20 years ago.

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There were no candles lit then, no memorial services. And each time I said this, there was a nodding of heads—gray-haired and balding as well as young—across the room. The smallest irreverent joke about President Bush was often met with hoots of laughter. I asked one of my hosts why this happened, why the audience accepted this from a Briton. "Because we don't think Bush won the election," she replied.

Of course, it's easy to be fooled. The first local radio shows illustrated all too well how the Middle East discourse is handled in America. When Gayane Torosyan opened WSUI/KSUI for questions in Iowa City, a caller named "Michael"—a leader of the local Jewish community, I later learnt, though he did not say this on air—insisted that after the Camp David talks in 2000, Yasser Arafat had turned to "terrorism" despite being offered a Palestinian state with a capital in Jerusalem and 96 per cent of the West Bank and Gaza. Slowly and deliberately, I had to deconstruct this nonsense. Jerusalem was to have remained the "eternal and unified capital of Israel," according to Camp David. Arafat would only have got what Madeleine Albright called "a sort of sovereignty" over the Haram al-Sharif mosque area and some Arab streets, while the Palestinian parliament would have been below the city's eastern walls at Abu Dis. With the vastly extended and illegal Jerusalem municipality boundaries deep into the West Bank, Jewish settlements like Maale Adumim were not up for negotiation; nor were several other settlements. Nor was the 10-mile Israeli military buffer zone around the West Bank, nor the settlers' roads, which would razor through the Palestinian "state." Arafat was offered about 46 per cent of the 22 per cent of Palestine that was left. I could imagine the audience of WSUI/KSUI falling slowly from their seats in boredom.

Yet back at my folksy, wooden-walled hotel, the proprietor and his wife—P Force volunteers in the Kennedy era—had listened to every word. "We know what is going on," he said. "I was a naval officer in the Gulf back in the Sixties and we only had few ships there then. In those days, the Shah of Iran was our policeman. Now we've got all those ships in there and our soldiers in the Arab countries and we seem to dominate the place." Osama bin Laden, I said to myself, couldn't put it better.

How odd, I reflected, that American newspapers can scarcely say even this. *The Daily Iowan*—there are no fewer than four dailies in Iowa City, press freedom being represented by the number of newspapers rather than their depth of coverage—had none of my hotel landlord's forthrightness. "The situation in the Middle East is one that many Americans do not adequately understand," it miserably lamented, "nor can they be reasonably articulate about it." This rubbish—that Americans were too dumb to comprehend the Middle East bloodbath and should therefore keep their mouths shut—was a pervasive theme in editorials. Even more instructive were the reports of my own lectures.

The headline, "Fisk: Who really are the terrorists?" in *The Daily Iowan* last week at least caught the gist of my message, and included my own examples of American press bias in the Middle East, although it failed on the facts, wrongly reporting that it was the United Nations (rather than the far more persuasive Israeli Kahan Commission) which concluded that Sharon was "personally responsible" for the Sabra and Chatila massacre. *The Des Moines Register*'s account of one of my talks was intriguing. It concentrated on my interviews with Osama bin Laden—which I had indeed mentioned in my lecture—and then referred to my account of how an Afghan crowd beat me up last December. I had told the American audience that the Afghans were outraged by US bombing raids that had just killed their relatives around Kandahar and how important it had been to include this fact in my own report of the fray—to give context and reason to the Afghan attack on me. *The Register* used my words to describe the attack but then itself made no mention of the reasons. Long live, I thought, the *Iowa City Press-Citizen*, whose own headline—"Middle East reporter slams media"—got the point.

It's not that Iowans have any excuse to be unaware of the Middle East. In the small town of Davenport, Israelis have been trained in the systems of the Apache AH-64 attack helicopters used to assassinate Palestinians on Israel's wanted list. According to one local journalist, several Iowa companies, including the regional office of Rockwell, have been involved in military contracts worth millions of dollars with Israel. CemenTech of Indianola supplies equipment to the Israeli air force. The day I arrived in Iowa City, John Ashcroft, the US Attorney General, was telling Iowans that a hundred foreign nationals "from countries known as home to terrorists" had been interrogated in the state. Another hundred were likely to be "interviewed" soon. There was no editorial comment on this.

So Iowa University classes were absorbing. One young woman began by announcing that she knew the American media were biased. When I asked why, she said that "it has to do with America's support for Israel..." and then, red-faced, she dried up. Not so the student in Rex Honey's global studies class. After I had outlined the military trap into which the Americans had been lured in Afghanistan—the supposed "victory" followed by further engagements with al-Qa'ida and then, inevitably, daily battles with Afghan warlords and sniping attacks on Western troops—he put his hand up. "So how do we beat them?" he asked. There was a gentle ripple of laughter through the room. "Why do you want to 'beat' the Afghans," I asked? "Why not help them build a new land?" The student came up to me afterwards, hand outstretched. "I want to thank you, sir, for all you told us," he said. I had a suspicion he was a military man. Are you planning to join the army, I asked? "No, sir," he replied. "I'm going to join the Marines."

I advised him to stay clear of Afghanistan. In its own way, the American national press was doing the same. Two days later, the *Los Angeles Times*, in a remarkable dispatch from its correspondent David Zucchino, reported on the bitterness and anger among Afghans whose families had been killed in United States B-52 bomber raids. The recent American battle in Gardez, the report said, had left "bitterness in its wake."

If only the same bluntness was applied to the Palestinian-Israeli war. Alas, no. On the freeway past Long Beach on Friday, I opened the *LA Times* to be told that Israel "mops up [sic] in the West Bank," while the syndicated columnist Mona Charen was telling readers in other papers that "98 percent of Palestinians have not been living under occupation since Israel pulled out under the Oslo accords" and that the Israeli Prime Minister at the time, Ehud Barak, had offered Arafat "97 percent of the West Bank and Gaza." This was 1 percent higher even than the statistic from "Michael" on WSUI/KSUI radio. Arafat—"this murderer with the deaths of thousands of Jews and Arabs on his hands"—was to blame. The issue between Israel and her neighbors, Charen contended, "is not occupation, it is not settlements and it certainly is not Israeli brutality and aggression. It is the Arabs' inability to live peacefully with others."

Maybe California is organically different from the rest of the United States, but its journalists as well as its students seemed a tad smarter than the Midwest of America. The Orange County Register, a traditionally conservative newspaper in an area that is now 50 per cent Latino, has been trying to tell the truth about the Middle East and was carrying a tough feature by Holger Jensen, which warned that if President Bush didn't rein in Sharon, the Israeli Prime Minister "will succeed where Osama bin Laden failed: forcing us into a war of civilizations against 1.2 billion Muslims." When I lunched with senior editorial staff, they invited three members of the Orange County Muslim community to join them.

Cocktails with friends of the Methodist church revealed a sane grasp of the Middle East—one of them was deeply disturbed by a recent remark by Israel's Internal Security Minister, Uzi Landau, who had said that "we're not facing human beings, but rather beasts." A black guest commended the UN secretary general Kofi Annan's criticism of Israel. Yet when I flipped on Fox News, there was Benjamin Netanyahu out-Sharoning Sharon, declaring that Palestinian suicide bombers would soon be prowling America's streets, meeting Congressmen to enlist their help in Israel's "war on terror," even while the US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, was in Israel.

"Why Israel's Mission Must Continue," the *New York Times*'s comment page shouted on Friday. A long and tedious article on Israel's crusade against "terror" by an Israeli army colonel, Nitsan Alon, included several of my favorite cop-out phrases, including the stock reference to "a large number of civilians" who were—yes—"caught in the crossfire."

By the time I was addressing the more bohemian denizens of an art club in Los Angeles, the newspapers I was attacking were beginning to turn up. Mark Kellner arrived to report for the *Washington Times*. "He's going to stitch up everything you say," a friend remarked. "*The Washington Times* is to the right of the Republican Party." We shall see.

But if my audiences had been largely made up of Americans without any Middle East roots, the same could not be said of Sunday's cocktails at the home of Stanley Sheinbaum, the philanthropist, art collector and libertarian—we shall forget the period in which he helped to run the Los Angeles Police Department—where my little speech was to set off some verbal hand-grenades. Sheinbaum it was who met Syria's President Hafez el-Assad at President Jimmy Carter's request, arranging Assad's extraordinary summit with Carter in Geneva. "Tell me something good about yourself," he said to me. Have you heard nothing good from anyone else, I inquired? "Nope," he said.

But I liked Sheinbaum, a crusty, humorous man in his eighties who encourages every liberal Jewish American to have his say about the Middle East. As the lunchtime fog embraced the rose gardens and villas and swimming pools and hills of Brentwood, up stepped Rabbi Haim dov Beliak to explain how he intends to close down the bingo and gambling operations of one of America's greatest Jewish settlement builders. "Call me when you get back to Beirut—by all means write about it." As we scoffed Stanley Sheinbaum's strawberries and sipped his fine Californian red wine, another rabbi approached. "You're gonna have some hostile people in your audience," he said. "Just let 'em hear the truth."

So I did. I talked about the cowardice of Secretary Powell, who dawdled his way around the Mediterranean to give Sharon time to finish destroying the Jenin refugee camp. I talked about the rotting bodies of Jenin and the growing evidence that back in 1982 Sharon's troops handed the survivors of the Sabra and Chatila massacre back to their Phalangist tormentors to be killed. I said that Arafat was never offered 96 per cent of the West Bank at Camp David. I advised the 100 or so people in the room to read the Israeli journalist Amira Haas' courageous reports in Haaretz. I talked about the squalor of the Palestinian camp. I talked of suicide bombings as "evil" but suggested that Israel would never have security until it abided by UN Security Council Resolution 252; that Israel would never have peace until it abandoned all of the West Bank, Gaza, Golan and East Jerusalem.

"I find it very difficult to ask you a question, because what you said made me so angry," a woman began afterwards. Why did I not realize that the Palestinians wanted to destroy all of Israel, that the right-of-return would destroy the state? For an hour I explained the reality I saw in the Middle East; an all-powerful Israel fighting an old-time colonial war. I talked about the 1954-62 Algerian war, its brutality and cruelty, the French army's torture and killings, the Algerians' slaughter of civilians, the frightening parallels with the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. I talked about the Palestinians who wanted, at the least, an admission of the injustice their people had suffered in 1948, adding that there were Palestinians aplenty who realized that financial compensation would have to suffice for most of those refugees whose homes were in what is now Israel. I talked about Sharon and his bloody record in Lebanon. And about the pressures of the Israeli lobby in America, the fear of being labeled an anti-Semite, and the feeble reporting of the Middle East.

A rabbi was the first to tell me afterwards that the Palestinians were victims, that they should be given a real state. An old lady asked me for the name of the best book on the Algerian war. I gave it to her; Alastair Horne's A Savage War of Peace . A card was pushed into my hand. "Insightful talk!" the owner had written at the bottom and—hate though I do the word "insightful"—I couldn't help noticing that the name on the card was Yigal Arens, the son of one of Israel's most ruthless right-wing ministers, who had once informed me—in Beirut, back in 1982—that Israel would "fight forever" against Palestinian terror.

On the freeway to LAX afterwards, the terminals and control tower looming through the Californian haze, I looked over Saturday's *LA Times.* A report on page 12 revealed that the BBC's award-winning film on Sharon's involvement in the Sabra and Chatila massacres had been dropped from a Canadian film festival after protests from Jewish groups. The organizers had explained that *The Accused* "could invite unwanted attention from interest groups"—whatever that means. But a paragraph at the end of the report caught my attention. "Sharon, who was the Israeli defense minister at the time, allegedly facilitated the assault on the Sabra and Chatila refugee camps..." There it was again. Allegedly? How many angry letters was that little lie supposed to avoid? Allegedly indeed.

But on reflection, I didn't think the Americans I met would be fooled by this. I didn't think my hotel proprietor would accept "allegedly." Nor the old naval officer from the John F Kennedy. Nor the listeners to KSUI. Nor even Stanley Sheinbaum. Yes, Osama bin Laden told me he thought Americans didn't understand the Middle East. Maybe he was right then. But not any more.

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SCENES

Fresno & Hanford Scene Report

Hi. My name is Lonnie. I play in lots of HC punk bands here, do a label and zines and stuff. So I'm gonna give you the info I know about the current Fresno punk scene. First I'm gonna start with bands. My girlfriend Meg and I, and Clay and Alex from Hanford, play in like the biggest Fresno band at the moment—we're called HATE MAIL KILLERZ. We are hyper fast thrashy HC punk with screamed female vocals . We have a full 7", a split 7", three tapes, a CDR, t-shirts,.patches, stickers, and an upcoming split 7" on Coalition Records and CD on Six Weeks Records due out this summer. Next are a few smaller bands I play in. AK FACE is fast raw HC with female vox. JERK/AK FACE split tape is planned on Mammut Discos Records from Chile. Next is the least known band in Fresno—we're called SNOT MASK. Raw HC punk is all we are. We're on a few comps here and there. Then last for bands I'm in, I play in, FUK NOTE, is noisy raw punk with garage influences. You can get a hold of HMK and my other bands at (Lon/Meg, 6676 N. Bendel, Fresno, CA 93722).

HATE MAIL KILLERZ

OK, moving right along, there's CIVIL DUTY, which has a quite a following. They play mid paced to fast punk with gruff vocals . They have a new full 7" out now, and they also have a tape and get to play a lot of shows locally (Dave, 6038 N. Knoll Ave, Fresno, CA, 93711).

Next we have ALL DEAD—they're kinda fast and rough, but very polished and new sounding punk, I think they have a tape and CDR out (Isaac, 919 E. Yale, Fresno, CA 93704).

Next we have CAPTIN CRAZY & THE SCALLYWAGS, which is an all girl pyrate punk band. They cover a Sheep Squeeze song and do the dress-up thing live and have lyrics about walking the plank and stuff. Fun!

Next we have CLEVAGE, who are an all girl pop punk band.

And then there's THE FALLOUTS, who have been around a while. They play fast and slow punk that sorta reminds you of Op Ivy or something. Silly fun stuff.

Then the FRATELLIES, who I've never heard, but I'm told they play pop punk too.

Then there's this band called THE YOUNG ONES, who I haven't heard either so I don't know what they sound like.

Next is FEELING FINE. These guys are fucking sick. HC crust/grind in the vein of Drop Dead, Skikabane, Ulcer and Crippled Bastards. Keep your eye on this band.

Next is FEARLESS CHIMP, which is a one man band. Fast ,crazy grind crust stuff. The chimp is around on comps and splits and stuff. You can get FC tapes from Legion Records (Don, 69 Newland Ct, Lakewood, CO 80226).

And then you've got this band called NOT 4 HIRE who have been around a whopping four years or something and don't put much out, but they often play shows . As far as I know they have a tape and a live CD out. (Alex D, 176 W. Keats, Fresno, CA, 93704)

Next is a band from up the street from here. They're called TOMS WHISKEY BINGE and they play noise. Our label put out two tapes for them. They're slow/fast wacked-out instro noise with screaming and stuff. (559-225-0858 or contact me). VILE ARCHIVES are roots of punk Iggy type stuff I think. CODE OF SILENCE play old school Fresno style punk hardcore .They're pretty cool and they've got a tape and CD out . Contact them (Matt, 2821 Claremont, Clovis, CA, 93611).

Last for bands is NO SELF CONTROL, who play slow intense HC similar to Neurosis.

Next are a few of the bigger Hanford bands I want to mention. First, FRANKENWEENIE broke up. Yes, it's so sad, but the rumors were true. The LUMPS are great thrash, they are awesome and have two tapes, a mini CD, a CD and a 10" is planned. LUMPS are hyper thrash like FRANKENWEENIE only meaner and faster. Great band (Alex, 2884 Adrian Cir, Hanford, CA 93230). Next is NAPALM SUCK who are a noisecore band and have like ten tapes or something crazy. They have a split 7" coming out shortly too. Get this record when it comes out (Anthony, 433 West Florinda, Hanford, CA 93230) Then there's a one man band called CASPAROMANTIKS which is fast blasts of mayhem and crushing breakdowns. Check this out if you like one-person bands (same address as LUMPS) That's all for Hanford bands.

Onto zines: I do *Fresno Punks Suk* fanzine that obsesses on HC punk music and such. I have four issues out. Also me, Meg and Clay do *Stampfiend* zine which has one issue out and is pretty thick full of reviews, interviews, and contacts (you can order these two zines for $1 each from my address above). Then in Hanford there's a zine called *Schitzophrenia* which is pretty decent and comes out pretty often (Anthony, 433 West Florinda, Hanford, CA 93230). Then there's a one-pager zine also from Hanford called *Spew*. I haven't seen it so I dunno, I heard its all black metal related or something (Yuk!) Then I think there's still *Disfunksional Family* zine that does full page issues now and then (same address as NOT 4 HIRE).

Last is a two labels I know about. The first is me and Meg's label Tortured Flag Records . We've been around for four years or so putting out split 7" records, tons of tape releases, CDR comps, patches, and a small distro. We're always working on something . Bands and distros get in touch. The other labels I want to mention are from Hanford. One is called Constant Pain Records and is a great small DIY label that does comps and so forth. He does tapes and records too.(Clay, 1300 N Douty, Hanford, CA 93230). Last is Braindead Records who have been around a long while putting out CDR releases like crazy, as well as tape and 7" releases. Great DIY active label. He has so many releases (2884 Adrian Cir, Hanford, CA 93230) If I missed any bands, labels or zines it's because you're too small and I just didn't know about you. If anyone has any questions on anything or how to contact bands here with no addresses, feel free to write me and I can most likely point you in the right direction. That's all, Lon.

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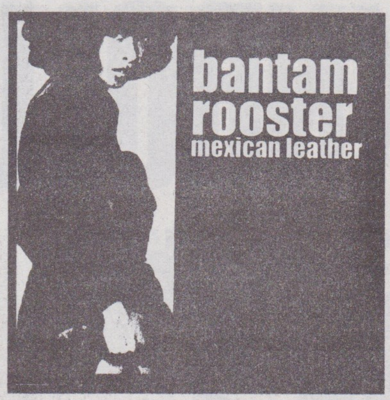

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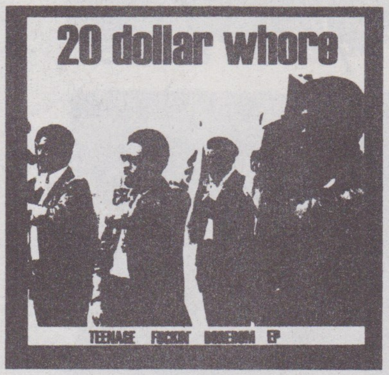

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

THE CURSE ROCKS! photo by Chris Boarts

photo by Paul Curran

THE PHANTOM LIMBS, SF

photo by Paul Curran

THE BANANAS, FROM SAC, CA

20th ANNIVERSARY BASH!

wheatpasting committee: Paul C., Sara S., Aaron C., Chris(tine), Karoline, Adam, Mike T. + Anandi brought pizza, fly visited... ♡ oh! and me, Arwen

photo by Chris Boarts

YOU CAN'T TELL FROM HERE, BUT KAROLINE IS <u>COVERED</u> IN WHEAT PASTE!

photo by Chris Boarts

ALL 229 COVERS OF MRR WHEATPASTED ON THE WALLS OF GILMAN ST.

TIM YO MEMORIAL BASKETBALL HOOP photo by Chris Boarts

NINE SHOCKS TERROR, cleveland punks photo by Paul Curran

SHARP KNIFE! photo by Chris Boarts

What do you see?

A Young Woman
or
an Elderly Woman?

You can see the picture either way. But you can only see it one way at a time, by changing your focus.

What else do you see?

Necessity or Greed?
Productivity or Exploitation?
Equity or Disparity?

Music or Activism? ...Change your focus.

COUNTDOWN TO PUTSCH

This interview was originally conducted by Mouk via email for his Canadian zine *Passion Driven*, a hardcore queer-positive zine that debuted early 2002.

MRR: First of all, how did CTP come together: How did the three of you get to play music as a band and what are your respective backgrounds as people?

Chris: At the time that we decided to start Countdown to Putsch, there was a laundry list of bands involved in the Putsch subplot. Rich had just decided to quit The Judas Iscariot, Ben was still playing in That's All She Wrote. And I—true to my over-achieving nature—was in two bands, The State Secedes and Your Adversary. The formation of Countdown to Putsch actually made no sense—none of us should have wanted to form another band. Rich was in a serious graduate program, Ben was commuting to Massachusetts to do his band, and I was practicing twice a week with two different bands, which constituted about three hours of in-the-car commuting. Why would any of us want to be in another band? The answer to this question was more than obvious at the time, and has come to seem more enlightened with the passage of time. It was stupid for any of us to take on a new project, but it was even stupider to turn down the opportunity to work with each other. The three of us are very different people, but we share a common desire to use music to enact change. While all of us had positive experiences with our past bands, we have achieved something that none of my past bands could muster: unity of purpose. There's no Putsch party line and we disagree often, but we agree fundamentally on the ideal we seek to achieve: the radical restructuring of human society and its interaction with the rest of the earth.

Rich: I think that Countdown to Putsch was sort of leaning to happen around the break-up of The Judas Iscariot. That band had some problems being able to accommodate the political and musical ideas I wanted to execute. When it finally came to an end, Chris and Ben and I, who knew each other mostly through MTN's relationship with The Judas Iscariot, felt that a collaboration of some kind was imminent. We talked about all kinds of musical ideas over the phone, and we put our concerns and our musical objectives on the table. Needless to say, we were all on the same page. I was so happy to find two people who were as open to politicization and creative music as I was, and it was clear that we had three lead vocalists and three lead lyricists between us from the start. I was born in December 1973, and I got into hardcore/punk at the age of 13. My Bar Mitzvah cake was in the shape of a turntable. I am married, and I teach philosophy (and radical politics, secretly) at St. John's University. Simultaneously, I work full-time at New School University in NYC, where I am also working towards my PhD in Political Theory. I consider myself an "extraordinarily desperate anarchist," meaning that I will use, or endorse the use of "The System" if I think it may yield to any progressive social change. In short, you could say I am a smart reformer—as opposed the stupid ones who believe that our capitalist oligarchy would be reversed if the right bill were passed through Congress. About six to seven years ago, in college, I heard improvised jazz music from the 60s, and proclaimed that "I had never heard anything so damn punk!" For a while, I listened mostly to this "Free" or "New" music. CTP is a hybridization of everything I like, or at least I think it almost is.

Ben: Starting this band for me was a little like getting asked to be in your favorite band. The Judas Iscariot was one of my favorite bands in the history of punk. Chris" various musical projects have all been really exciting to me. Hearing the Halfman 7"s and the many excellent records Mountain put out were formative experiences for me. So it was kind of surreal when Rich asked if I wanted to be in a band with him and Chris. Though it was bittersweet due to the break up of The Judas Iscariot. I teach middle school English in Harlem. I love teaching. I'm currently fighting against my own laziness and socialization to be less politically hypocritical. I grew up in central Mass, I paid a lot of money to be a certified teacher to a relatively "esteemed" university, and I will leave NYC eventually for the sanity of country life.

MRR: From the name of the band and the title of your first album, *Handbook For Planetary Progress*, it is quite clear and obvious that CTP is a band that carries a political/social message. Is it that you are activists and politically and socially aware folks who've joined together to spread your ideas, concepts, thoughts, and opinions through music, hardcore punk?

Chris: Yes.

Rich: I'm not sure that we all understand exactly what you are asking with this question, but I'll bet one of us has answered it here. I would definitely call myself politically and socially aware, although I am only a part-time activist right now. Moments in the class I teach, when the students begin to "understand" radical ideas, are instances of activist success. I also try to stay involved with local actions, from "teach-ins" to protests. Usually, I will go to one to two protests or demonstrations a month in the New York City area. I do this to keep myself connected to organized local dissent, and to be counted as a part of the resistance. I definitely think of CTP as using hardcore punk to develop a "musical activism." The best results from protests, when the people take to the streets, are usually education, and a willingness to speak out and act out for a particular cause. They provoke thought, gain attention, and give voice to different struggles for progress. This is exactly what I think CTP does in its most successful moments… whether it happens after reading and listening to our material, or at a show, CTP's objectives fit within the broader movements for radical social change.

Ben: For me the title of the CD is almost a little too over the top. I don't want to suggest that we know how everything should be but we've definitely got a lot of ideas that we want to throw into the pot. We also want to make it loud and clear what our band is about. We don't want to bury our politics in vague lyrics. We are interested in being a part of an increasingly political scene—not the increasingly style-oriented scene that most of us are dealing with now. The band name is also geared toward making it clear that our intentions are political. If there is one way that I think we seek to be labeled it is as a political band.

MRR: About the book: It is simply enormous, filled with 100 pages worth of ideas, words, opinions, and facts. The content is listed alphabetically with very diverse subjects such as academics, art, beliefs, "Children Choose Hot Dogs," the death penalty, "Epistemology: The Demolition Of Wimmin," "Free-Jazz, the New Version of Punk in the 1960s," "Socrates—The Ancient Putschist!" and Yelling, Screaming, and "What is this screaming and yelling about?" Almost anything you can think of is treated in this book. As it is written on the second page, it was "conceived of, created and produced from April 1998 to July 1999" and finally, "released in August of 1999." The amount of work that went into this book/project is very heavy… How did the idea of doing a book originate and how did you guys go about finding, writing and discussing subjects to put in the final version?

Rich: With the *Handbook for Planetary Progress*, we knew that we wanted to publish a book with the CD (or a CD with the book), almost from the very inception of our plan to create a "full-length" Countdown to Putsch release. To me, this was an effort, within all of our ongoing efforts, to carry punk's supposed prioritization of content over form to its logical conclusion. We wanted to make our commitment to ideas and to action as difficult to ignore as possible… Lest there be any mistake that CTP is more concerned with music than social change. Also, it was a great way to take advantage of the fact that all three of us wanted to write out our ideas to share with others… Having spent the previous two to three years in The Judas Iscariot, a band where I had to severely restrict the expression of my political opinions, I had accumulated a load of material for CTP's debut.

Ben: We wanted to do something more than just make another product. At least our product attempts to make people grapple with what they've purchased. I would also suggest reading lyrics to "Futile Taxonomy" on the new record for my most coherent opinion on this subject.

Chris: The book definitely took a *ton* of work. We spent hours individually writing our sections, and then spent as much time discussing, refining, and laying out the final product. Strangely, it did not seem like a lot of work. We basically just started rolling and it all came out; I think that this band offered all of us the chance, perhaps for the first time, to deal with a variety of important topics that had been "brewing" in our minds for years. I know that I was motivated by the confidence that I could really bring almost any of my beliefs and ideas to the table with Putsch; in previous bands, I was aware that many topics were too controversial for my band mates to deal with. As we work towards our second release, I realize that it is always easier to accomplish a large task the first time you do it; one of the dilemmas of the *Handbook for Planetary Progress* is how to create its sequel.

MRR: Rich used to play in The Judas Iscariot (a band that mixed saxophone and jazz rhythms, sonorities as well as a certain style of playing; with basic hardcore punk guitar, bass, drums, and screaming). Also, Ben and Chris used to (or still do?) play in hardcore bands that emphasized the more "emotional" end of things; all of those bands definitely influenced CTP since its music incorporates some jazz elements such as saxophone, trumpet, and time signatures and structures typical of jazz and hardcore structures and style of playing. I presume that your very approach of mixing and experimenting will grow gradually perhaps by adding other "odd" instruments not often associated with hardcore (xylophone, upright bass, clarinet, or percussion for example) or experimenting with different rhythms and sounds. What are the instruments that each of you plays these days or plans on learning to play in the near future? How did the idea to literally "fuse" those two musical genres together while adding a bit of aboriginal instrumentation with the didjerido come to mind?

Rich: In The Judas Iscariot, Aaron (drummer) and I learned that we both loved listening to experimental/improvised jazz music ("The New Jazz"). Not only

did we really love the iconoclastic intensity of the music, but we also had a deep appreciation for the philosophical/political/spiritual intentions of the musicians using an improvisational approach. The history of this "free" music is profoundly political as a response of Africans living in America and to the burgeoning music industry that was engulfing a "jazz market." It was a critique, often without any words at all, that could not be denied, ignored, or misunderstood as such. The musicians, often repressed by poverty, were able to liberate themselves from rigidity through the music. The Judas Iscariot realized, soon after recording the demo, that we could never again make music uninfluenced by this revolutionary "free jazz." In Countdown to Putsch, we are trying to make our love and appreciation of improvisational/experimental music more than just a novelty. CTP may have over 20 minutes of improvisation on a single CD, and we really try to bring out its significance as a message. Personally, I think I will stick with the drums and trumpet for now, maybe experimenting with some different forms of percussion. I am not presently motivated to learn any other instruments. The reason why I think the structures of hardcore punk and "The New Jazz" are inextricably linked is because of the energy that they share and the fact that they both represent struggles to transcend the current state of existence.

Ben: I play alto and tenor sax (primarily alto), guitar and drums. I'd like to play drums more. I have access to a trumpet, a violin and a piano all of which I would like to start playing if I were suddenly to have all sorts of free time. For me, I have come to want to be able to say more and more through music and I can say different things on different instruments. As a unit Putsch obviously can do/say a lot more with any sort of rearranged instrumentation so that's a big part of our approach. Additionally, none of us want to be restricted in what sort of music we make or reference or what sort of sounds we create. We are influenced by a lot music and I hear all sorts of music in my head all the time and to only listen and create one small portion of what I hear seems pretty ridiculous.

Chris: I am really uncomfortable with discussing musical styles; I am not sure from where or from what this discomfort arises, but it is an acute aversion. I too see what you are seeing: that Countdown to Putsch can be—in part—viewed as a mixture of all of our previous bands. But, I think that Putsch really is more a mixture of the three of us, rather than our past musical projects, and it may be sort of misleading to view the Jazz as coming from The Judas Iscariot and the Emo as coming from That's All She Wrote. In truth, I think that we all were "liberated" by the Putsch's initial determination to play whatever music we felt was inspirational, enjoyable to play, and progressive. The fact that more of this "freedom" leaked out in The Judas Iscariot is probably just a tribute to the musical open-mindedness of Jeff and Aaron, the other members of Judas. Personally—before Countdown to Putsch—I have always been the person in the bands that I joined that did not gravitate to conventional ideas. This may be linked to my discomfort in discussing music—the truth is that I am not well-versed in musical conventions, and I am surprisingly unaware of basic styles, time signatures, and prominent musicians. Because I have little conventional musical training, my view of what is possible is different from most people. In most of my previous bands, this led to a lot of frustration, as I would propose ideas (musically, lyrically—sometimes even theatrically) that other members just did not find compelling. For this reason I never truly felt comfortable in any of the bands in which I played guitar. Finally I feel comfortable to try things. Countdown to Putsch gives most ideas a try, and the result is music that we think is interesting to play. We hope that it is interesting to listen to, but that is not the primary concern; I think that our raw enjoyment—an enjoyment that supercedes in importance audience reception and perception—fuels music that is more "free" than any I have produced previously. There was no particular plan—other than the plan to play "free" music—which allowed an instrument like the didjeridoo to get involved. To tell the truth, I had been carrying around that PVC DIY didjeridoo ever since it was given to me by my friend Matt, and I was just dying to find a band that would let me play it. Neither of the other two bands that I was playing with at the time would let me get close to a stage or recording studio with the didjeridoo; Putsch would. Similarly, there is no plan to incorporate particular elements into future music, but the very ground rules of the band make it quite likely that some new and bizarre noise making device will emerge within a future recording.

MRR: For some, inspiration for music, for creation, for writing, for going through the day or to work in a productive and effective manner comes from punk rock, jazz, friendship, or seeing our loved ones while having a meal at the table. For others, it can come from a sense of accomplishment, a reward, a smile, a compliment, or money. For you three (Ben, Richard and Chris), what are some of the inspirational things that help you create, teach (since the three of you are actually teachers!), go through your day, get involved in the hardcore/punk community, play music, and collectively run a NYC record label with some fellow punk rock kids?

Rich: I am inspired by devoted idealists, hopeful and creative aspirations, and having a lot of love in my life. When I read about Emma Goldman's life, for example, I am filled with an inspiration that I take with me into my own life. The existence of older activist/scholars, like Howard Zinn, Jello Biafra, and Barbara Ehrenreich fill me with inspiration and force me to remember that idealism is only "outgrown" when people lose their spirit—not because they've "matured." The hopeful and creative aspirations of my friends, great bands, and poignant movies also fill me with inspiration—as they seek to enlighten us through distinctive new means. And finally, but no less important to me, the love that I feel with my wife Robyn, my beautiful cat companions, my friends, and sometimes even from family, makes me feel like I can face the world and do the things I do.

Ben: This question deserves a book-length answer. Each activity/situation grows out of so many different things that I'm simply going to give you a partial answer. For me, the inspiration to teach or be an activist (which are synonymous if you ask me) is that I have the privilege to help others. I have the time and money to go to protests and actions, I had parents who were able to transfer their privilege to me so that I am "educated" and middle class. Essentially, I have the leisure to be helping others—so I feel I must. When I confronted my own privilege (and I continue to do so) it was a choice between doing what I could and feeling good about myself, or abusing my privilege and becoming another drone. Artistically I try to open myself up to as much art as possible, in as many forms as possible. I read, go to museums, talk to other people about their ideas (very important), listen to a lot of varied music. But also I am continuously inspired by the simple (see "Arguing Against that Contention That All Art Must Come From Discontent" in *Ideas for Living and Willing to Act*). My friends (very much including Chris and Rich) continually inspire me both in their actions and ideas. Having the sort of friends I have is a source of constant inspiration. The students I teach are a source of constant inspiration (they remind me of the urgency with which we must act to change things). I think we can be inspired by pretty much anything, it's a question of what we are inspired to do by these things and is what sets people apart I think.

Chris: This is a tough question for me because I have hit a juncture in my life where I am struggling to supply myself with the energy to maintain all of these activities. I have tried to cut down on my activity with the Mountain Collective for Independent Artists, I've made my best attempt to not get too involved at school, and even with Putsch I do not spend as much time as I used to working on musical and political ideas. I guess that you could call it "burn-out," but the thing is that I really just feel

physically exhausted, maybe emotionally exhausted, but not ideologically exhausted—which is the kind of exhaustion that I associate with true burn-out. I always thought that exhaustion was something experienced on a daily, weekly, monthly, or even yearly basis. Every day I go home and recharge, weekends also clear exhaustion, and summer vacations purge that yearly fatigue. But after almost a decade of doing all these activities, I feel totally tired, and it is a tired that a good night's sleep or even a nice week of vacation does not cure. I have always been synergistically inspired: teaching inspired punk rock, which inspired teaching, and so on. In part I am inspired to do something right, to do something that will have a positive impact on the world. Praise from others, particularly those I respect greatly, does motivate me as well. But there is also just a certain fire that I have always possessed that screamed "get involved, do something, get to work." This internal fire needs rekindling.

MRR: To my knowledge, Chris and Ben both participate in a project called The Mountain Collective for Independent Artists. It used to be a label run by Chris only; but now it is a label where people can join and participate in releasing records, getting involved in cooperation and making a change. An interesting note is that, so far, there have been three records that have been specifically directed at more or less touchy/controversial subjects to provoke thought and discussion: *An Education* comp LP; the *I Can't Live Without It!* comp LP focusing on the death penalty; the *Save Me* 7"' comp regarding the issue of suicide; and more recently, there is going to be a benefit CD compilation about the Farm Sanctuary. I firmly think that it goes to show that bands and kids can get involved in trying to make a change for the better and that Mountain Collective for Independent Artists encourage causes that can affect ourselves as persons and inevitably our immediate environment. How does Mountain Collective for Independent Artists work (Ethics, ways of working, choosing bands to work with, releasing records, community involvement, etc.)? Is there any possibility that the Collective for Independent Artists can become more than a record label and publish literature (books, essays, novels, etc.) or projects other than music? Is Mountain Collective for Independent Artists a label that you see as being radically different than others and if so, what is it that makes it stand out?

Ben: First, The Mountain Cooperative recently reincorporated as The Mountain Collective for Independent Artists. We're officially a non-profit and we're currently seeking charitable status. With this move we're trying to reconceive what we are and what we can be. We're definitely trying to move away from just being a record label and towards being active in local, national and global politics. We're working on a bunch of stuff that will more directly benefit our communities as well as trying to put together releases that are in different media (not just music). I think we are different from most other record companies because we're not really a record company. There are definitely others who I think are doing similar work (notably, CrimethInc whom I find pretty inspiring). However, it's a difficult process because we have limited funds and limited time (we're all volunteering our nights and weekends). What's awesome is that we have a core group of really dedicated people that I think will help create the behemoth of change that we envision. Running a record label is boring because you really only do one thing—running a non-profit arts collective/activist group let's you pretty much do anything you want. So Mountain has the potential to be something really powerful and I'm excited about it even though the every day maintenance of a DIY label/etc can be really draining.

MRR: Perhaps the single most thing that sets CTP apart from other bands (never mind the style of the music) is the fact that text is in *massive* quantity and of varied sources, opinions and subjects. Yes, many bands include explanations with lyrics in their record sleeves. But how many take the effort to put *more* that what is discussed in the songs? How many bands feature an interview or a spoken word track on their records regarding political/social actions or discussions? Not many that I know of... The MTN album has a 100-page length book regarding pretty much every subject worth talking/discussing about and, from what I saw on the Ebullition web site, the next album is going to be released with a magazine. Interesting, to say the very least. How important is it for you three to explain and expose thoughts, ideas and points of views through essays, texts, and anecdotes? Are you using text as another way to express the ideas inhabiting CTP or to express issues that would be difficult to take musical form? Is it necessary? Does it reach people or not?

Ben: Hardcore for me has always been a vehicle through which people could be politicized. I think the point of hardcore and the community that surrounds the music is to foster radical departure from the belief systems that are imposed on us by mass media, the government, capitalism, etc. So any means by which we can do that we are going to use. Does it work? Well, it worked for me. It might not work for some people and there are a lot of people who don't need it, but there are plenty of people who it does work for and every time that I get doubtful of that fact I remember what I was like previous to being introduced to hardcore/punk and what I was like afterwards. Also, I really believe that there are certain things I want to say through lyrics or music or poetry or fiction or essay writing and the subject may be best suited for only one of those media. If your band only plays music and writes lyrics and you can't figure out how to say something using that avenue then you're probably not going to say it. That's unacceptable to me. I want it out there, I'm going to say it however best I can and I'm not going to limit myself because most bands have historically played music and lyrics only.

Rich: Actually, I am really damn sick of bands within the grassroots music community claiming to prioritize their views over their roles as musicians in bands, while the most prominent feature of what they do remains the sound of their songs. The sound of the songs should not, in my view, be presented as the most prominent feature of what a decisively political musician offers to her listener. Of course, there are those rare cases where one's musical structure and composition is so radically different than what came before it that enough food for thought is contained in a listen alone… In such rare instances, I would not criticize a band for failing to produce a book of essays!! Also, you cannot fairly demand that bands write political and social essays to accompany their music when, from the start, they never claimed a political objective. So, Countdown to Putsch is really responding to a part of culture and subculture that seeks to be a muscle for progressive movement… Where are the essays, where is the art, where is the dialogue? …Last time I checked, radical change was not in any way facilitated by the sound of thrash alone. Hence, it is very important for me to be in a band that exceeds the limits of what is said in our songs and lyrics, and broaches as many topics as is realistically possible. There is no shortage of crises that need our attention. And, although I disagree with you that CTP talks about every subject worth discussing, making music is an opportunity to engage people's thinking that too many musicians don't take. Whether or not it reaches people is hard to say. There is some evidence that it does and has, but I prefer to think of it this way: Not successfully reaching people is the worst argument for not trying to… In fact, if we have not reached people yet, that is proof that we need to keep on trying.

Chris: Somehow we stumbled upon this idea that the text ought not be a second thought, that content beyond the music and the lyrics should be represented in our releases. These two releases, both of which have 100 pages of

text/graphics accompanying the CD, were incredible labors of love. They also were laborious, and it is quite clear to me exactly why most bands don't undertake such an effort—we actually play fewer shows, write fewer songs, and are otherwise less musically active because we are involved in the production of text as well as music. So the importance of this "extra material" is self-evident in that we have chosen not to make it extra. That we have sacrificed some degree of musical work in favor of also doing non-musical work suggests just how critical this varied approach is for us. Clearly there are ideas which just cannot be presented as lyrics, that do not come across in song, and often transcend the verbal. Countdown to Putsch is probably the only real outlet I have for many ideas, and so it is necessary that I express them in whatever manner works best. Whether this kind of content-music balance is "necessary" in a more general sense I would not venture to say; what is clear is that far too few bands even attempt to strike this balance. And Countdown to Putsch is certainly an inadequate test of whether or not this approach reaches people; this is an idea that needs to be embraced and "tested" by a lot more bands.

MRR: How did the idea for the interview with the late Mr. Hamzah come about, and will politically/socially minded spoken word or interviews be included in other releases? What is in your opinion the value of spoken words/interviews in punk rock? Is it necessary? Does it reach people or not?

Ben: I'll leave the first part to Rich because he knew Jafar far better than anyone else in the band. I think that spoken word, like any medium, can be made vital with the right content and presentation. There are some extremely relevant spoken word artists as well as people who do great interviews (I am not one of them I think) out there and there are a lot of mediocre ones too. I think that using whatever medium you are most comfortable is what everyone should do and I think that HC/punk should seek to utilize them all and in that way I do think it's necessary. I can't say to what degree it reaches people, but I can attest to the fact that many people have spoken to me about Jafar since hearing the CD. I think a lot more people know about Jafar now then before the CD was made so in that sense it has absolutely been an effective means of propaganda and education.

Rich: The interview with Indonesian human rights activist, Jafar Siddiq Hamzah, was completing an idea that we all had to put spoken commentary on the CD. Jafar was a friend of mine who was also a comrade at the Graduate Faculty where I go to school. He was studying Political Science and working in the US on bringing a lawsuit against Mobil Oil for their involvement in military atrocities committed against the people of Aceh. Before he came to NY, he was a human rights lawyer in Indonesia, charging contentious cases under General Suharto's regime. In his country, he had gained enormous notoriety for his work, but in ours he was a taxi driver and a student and struggling with language and rent and school. Another Indonesian friend of mine had originally put me into contact with Jafar, and Jafar was eager to do the interview. He did not care about money or any kind of reward, since he viewed any opportunity to speak about his and his people's struggle as one that could not be passed up. When Jafar was murdered a year later in Medan, our hearts were filled with sadness and rage. To this day, I feel infuriated and crushed by the murder of this great uncommon spirit. Jafar's work was his life, and all other considerations were secondary to him. There are too few people like Jafar in our world, and I will always think of his beautiful smile and enthusiasm. Sometimes, the thought just strikes at me, when I least expect it to. I have heard some people respond to the Jafar interview, and I have written other pieces about it—one of which is in the new release on Ebullition. To me, spoken word is not nearly as integrated into punk as it should be. I think we need far more voices, unmuddled by noise, clear and instantly accessible, in punk. Music and noise and lyric sheets and screaming and yelling are necessary components of the broader picture of honing and articulating a community's rage—but these components should never have gone as far in silencing naked voices as much as they have in punk. There is another lengthy spoken word piece on the new CD by feminist Susan Brownmiller. As punks, many of us need to learn to listen to vital voices outside of the context of our music.

Chris: I am a huge believer in the power of dialogue and conversation. The glory of a good interview is that it allows a quality conversation to be disseminated. Listening to or reading an interview is of course a poor substitute for actually participating in one, but ideally hearing the conversations of others motivates the listener to find quality dialogues in her/his own life. Just hearing the earnest words of Jafar Hamzah makes me want to create informative, inspirational dialogues in my own life.

MRR: What is coming up for CTP? Last comments?

Ben: Good question: Tour this summer, write new music, play shows regularly now that we have a van, keep stretching out musically and politically, deal with not living in the same city, stay relevant and active.

Rich: At the time of this interview, CTP is getting ready to leave to tour the month of July 2001. Actually, we began this interview almost one year ago!! ...So this interview reflects our perspectives over the past twelve months! Crazy. The new record on Ebullition is out now, and we're bringing it with us!! For me, this band is only one out of so many ways to engage others in dialogue and thought. Countdown to Putsch does not need to exist for any member of this band's political and social engagement with others. You can do so much to connect with your community, even if you're like me and have very little time to do so. Be creative and think about your resources. I think that Countdown to Putsch should be maintained by the three of us for as long as we feel that it continues to question and provoke, for as long as we can enlarge upon precedents and create something new, fresh, and challenging. That is the only personal rule I have for being in this band. I don't measure what we do on scales comparing us to other bands because, by our very design, we don't do what others do. Countdown to Putsch, for me, is a method of struggle, and it is one that I value very much in my life. As long as we can keep on challenging others and ourselves we should keep on doing our thing.

Chris: This is going to be a really challenging time for Countdown to Putsch. We continue to progress musically, ideologically, and personally, but this process often seems as if it is in a vacuum. We really have not had much of a chance to speak to or hear from people who have received our releases. We have been so lucky to have support for our work, and at times it seems like it would be unreasonable to expect such luck to continue. Additionally, we are all somewhat fragmented by obligations in our life outside of the band, so it is hard to know exactly what to expect. I am learning to let go of expectations. I hope that Rich, Ben, and I continue to produce more ideas, and that they receive some audience.

Countdown to Putsch Discography:

Handbook for Planetary Progress, Book/CD, full-length, Mountain Collective for Independent Artists

Ideas for the Living and Willing to Act, Magazine/CD, full-length, Ebullition Records

ABC No Rio Benefit Compilation, CD, two live released songs, Level-Plane Records

Critical Pedagogy: A Compilation of Teachers in Punk Bands, CD/LP, one song, Six Weeks Records

Farm Sanctuary Benefit Compilation, CD, one song, Mountain Collective for Independent Artists

Scribbles: A Compilation of Music and Visual Art, LP, one song, Tied in Knots

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The Awakening

MRR: Who does what in the band and how long have you been around?
Matt-bass/vocals, Dennis-guitar/vocals, and Jimmy-drums/vocals. This coming summer, we will have been playing together for two years. Matt took Mark's place playing bass sometime in the fall of 2000.
MRR: You guys took the time to do a tape, which in these days of fly by night hype bands and vulture labels making "offers" to put out records by the ex-members of the next big thing, is a rarity.
Dennis: Yeah, I think that it is a shame that most bands are in such a hurry to start "playing out," to tour, and to put out records. I would much rather take things a little slower. We didn't start this band just so we could go on tour and put out records. Don't get me wrong, that stuff is definitely fun, but being in a band involves a lot more than that to me. I'm not into just throwing riffs together, hopping into the studio, and then maybe write some lyrics while we are in there....or to put out a record just because some dude wants to front the money. That is not what a band is to me. Making a tape first seemed like the right thing to do...not just because it is in the "punk/hc tradition" or whatever, but because at the time, and as are most bands, we were still trying to find our niche; and why go through this huge production to press 1,000 records of songs that we might not even like 6 months down the road?
MRR: The lyrics seem to have a futuristic tone depicting an Earth that has been plundered by industry and western living. What are the inspirations behind the lyrical style?
Matt: For me, an important part of understanding and visualizing lyrics and songs has a lot to do with imagery. There is a fine line between having good imagery and being overdramatic. If you're overdramatic, then no one can take you seriously. But if it is great imagery, it can have a frightening effect.
Dennis: I grew up in one of the most polluted areas in the United States (it used to be in the top 10...I am not sure if it still is). In southeastern Ohio, specifically the Marietta/Belpre/Beverly area, there are countless factories (Shell Chemical, Elkem Metals, AmpOhio, etc.) pumping out pounds upon pounds of pollution every day. The area sits in a valley, and this causes a lot of the pollution to stay right there; the rest of it pretty much goes toward the east coast. My father used to work in a factory called Union Carbide where they produced all kinds of carcinogenic dyes and chemicals. I was very young at the time. One of my most vivid memories from that time was seeing his feet that had turned yellow and green from working there. Mix that with growing up in the late 70s/80s, red scare era....and of course you can't leave out the fact that I listened to lots of heavy metal.
MRR: Do you think that this is the direction that we are headed with our environmental policies, that the Earth will one day remain a "lifeless husk?"
Dennis: On a global scale, I see a massive storm ahead. With the policies of institutions like the World Bank and the World Trade Organization, there could be serious environmental trouble in the future. There is already lots of economic trouble being caused for poorer countries like Brazil. Ironically, these policies are supposed to help them. And I don't see things getting better, especially when they are forcing the countries to cut social welfare programs and to shift towards an export economy. Most of the people reading this magazine know who these policies are actually helping....the multinationals. The environmental damage could be devastating, especially if a certain country's environmental laws and regulations are seen as a trade barrier. Then that country's government either has to back down from their law or prepare to pay money from a lawsuit. I doubt that we could actually turn the whole planet into a "lifeless husk," but I think that it is likely that we will come pretty close.
Matt: Considering that 60-70% of the foods that we eat contain genetically engineered components, and that

number is growing, plus the general sense of apathy or unawareness that people have, It kind of seems like this will happen.

Jimmy: It is most likely inevitable that everything will be used up and pillaged of its natural properties.

MRR: I often wonder if the unpresedented amount of damage that humans have already inflicted upon the earth is amendable at this point. Do you think that there is a way to turn the tide as far as the wreckage to date?

Matt: Humans have killed a lot of this planet, but there still is a lot left. But eventually, we will kill the planet and everything on it. It's inevitable, it's just a matter of time. People will always dig deeper, fly higher, and expand more.

Dennis: Of course. It would take ages for the earth to cleanse itself...I don't really see humankind initiating that change. It will most likely have to wait until we kill ourselves off. I think this is an inherent trait of industrialism and capitalism. To keep producing more. Not to seek out an equilibrium...but to keep pushing for more, until we are forced to stop. I still have some hope that this will not be the case, but for the most part, I see a tragic end for humankind. Well, maybe it wouldn't be so tragic. Then the earth will be able to begin to heal itself.

Jimmy: I would imagine most of the damage is irreversable. I suppose with our nation's wealth and power, we could easily shift our movement of technology out of the private and government sectors and into local systems and legislation that would be able to control production (specifically materials and processes) vs. waste ratio.

MRR: Beside the song; "Black Soot Curse" there is a quote that reads; "We stand and watch while strip mining ravages Appalachia." What exactly is going on there and is there any active resistance to the destruction of these mountains?

Dennis: Probably the worst thing, in my mind, that is happening to the Appalachian mountains is a relatively new form of strip mining, called "mountaintop removal." Coal mining companies use this method as a cheap and efficient way to extract coal from the Appalachian mountains. What happens is this: Machines eat away at the mountain to expose the seams of coal. When this happens, the earth that has been dug up, or torn off of the top of the mountain, rather...not only gets dumped into the surrounding valleys and streams, but it also grows much larger than the original size of when it was compacted within the mountain. The result is buried streams and wildlife. Supposedly, the coal mining companies are required to restore the mining site topography to its "Approximate Original Contour (the AOC mandate that is a part of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act that was passed as a federal law in 1977)," but they have found a way to get around the ruling through a loophole. An exception was made for the law, for "mines undergoing commercial development." Coal companies simply claim that the flat lands they create are actually a form of wildlife development, even though the reclaimed sites are barely even able to sustain grass. The argument is the same old story. The environment at the expense of jobs. This isn't just some vague, environmentalist concern. This type of stripmining has direct effects on the surrounding communities as well. Flooding, water quality damage, air quality damage, etc. And in southern West Virginia, this type of mining only employs less than one percent of its workers. Tourism brings in far more revenue for the state than the coal mining that is destroying potential areas for the tourists to come and visit. It makes no sense. In southern West Virginia, mountaintop removal has leveled about 1/4 of the mountains in that area. At its current rate, it is estimated that in 20 years, more than of the region's mountains will be destroyed. As far as active resistance, there is comparatively not much going on. West Virginia is a poor fucking state, who has the resources to take on these huge coal companies that have the politicians in their back pockets? There is definitely some resistance going on, you can't expect people to just lie down and die, but it is an uphill battle for them. I've done a lot of work with a group in southeastern Ohio, called the Buckeye Forest Council, and they do tons of work with coal mining, if anyone wants to try to get involved, they should contact them.

MRR: What are your feelings on the signifigance of bands who sing songs of nuclear war and mass destruction, especially in light of Bush's current statement that we "must prepare ourselves for nuclear war?"

Jimmy: Music and art will always reflect reactions to social circumstances. I am not always interested in the artists that are so straight forward about their feelings toward events. Obviously, this threat has been looming over our heads for years. And you can almost become numb to the reality of it. I am only 21, and I remember being four or five and thinking my family could be killed by nuclear war, even though we weren't in as serious danger as the countries we were opposed to.

Dennis: A lot of these songs have become laughable because the topic has been so overdone and the threat of global destruction from nuclear war had somewhat eased out of the American consciousness. But I think that we will soon end up in a state of red alert, once again. George W. Bush is seeking favorable ratings by starting this so-called war on terrorism and what he calls "the axis of evil." We will be seeing the largest military build up in the United States in years, and I think that it is going to bring the whole world to the brink of nuclear destruction once again, just like Mr. Reagan did. Especially how I grew up in the late 70s and 80s, we were constantly being barraged by warnings of nuclear destruction at the hands of the "commies." It is something that will be forever in my subconscious. So, yes, I do find that the lyrics of bands such as Discharge, Icons of Filth, and early Nuclear Assault (*Handle With Care* and previous) to be important and scary.

MRR: The song "Fire in the Valley" reads like a community in revolt with the lyrics "torches and bottles...we knock on your front door...we have a message for you." What is this song about? Sounds like your throwing molotovs to me.

Dennis: For the most part, that song was written to be an analogy for the community to awaken (the song was originally going to be called the awakening, but we stole it to use for the band name instead), and realize what the corporate leeches are doing to our livlihood. In Columbus, we have a "development" company called "Campus Partners" and for a couple years now, they have been buying up property and making various deals to kick out the local businesses from the main drag in the Ohio State campus area. Their plan is to "revitalize" the area from what they saw was a trashy, run-down area, to a corporate dreamland filled with the Gap, a parking garage, a massive cinema-plex and various other large corporate entities. They threatened all the local businesses and landowners with using "imminent domain," a clause that basically says that what they are doing is in the public interest, so they have a legal right to kick them out if they don't leave or sell their property. This is what is so fucked up about the situation. How is it in the public interest to replace local businesses with businesses like the Gap who will be taking most of the money that they make out of the area? They say "look at all the jobs we are creating," but most of the money from the community will be leaving the community and going into already rich hands. I think that it would have made more sense to use the energy and money to fix up the already existing local businesses. I go back and forth as far as what would be the best way to deal with entities like "Campus

Partners." Obviously, it would not be an easy thing to do....to rid the community of them. At this point, it is probably impossible, unless an angry mob did happen to materialize and physically force them to leave. In a lot of ways, the song is also a day dream about this happening.

Matt: I've only lived here two years and slowly I have seen various mom and pop businesses leave the area. Put out of business by popular business or bought out by "Campus Partners," forced to leave. You look down the street and see 95% of the buildings empty and dead, awaiting the rejuvinating arrival of a Gap or a couple more Starbucks. It's really sickening.

MRR: Punk in America seems to be very safe. Bands are able to voice their views without fear of government or police persecution . Do you feel that we will begin to see those freedoms infringed upon by Tom Ridges' Homeland Security Gestapo? Do you think that we will see bands being grilled about Anarchist affiliation, literature searched, gigs busted up,etc.?

Jimmy: It is a very real situation that our government can now label anyone questioning authority as a terrorist. It is strange how we have almost regressed into a new red-scare like scenario with witch hunting "terrorists."

Dennis: Anyone who has played in bands and have attempted to cross either the U.S./Canadian border or the Mexican/U.S. border have already felt what this is like. It is a strange feeling, having your entire van ripped apart, your pockets searched, your records/lyrics scrutinized, the little pieces of paper in your wallet being read...especially those of us that live in the United States....we generally do not have to deal with this as much as folks in some other countries. I guess it could happen....especially now that people who go to protests are considered terrorists. We did think about this. Because we have a song on our 7" called "Set the Nasdaq on Fire" that is about some of the things that happened on Sept. 11th with the World Trade Center. Although we hope we don't end up with a situation like what happened to the Doom *Police Bastard* record...I think that it is doubtful that it will happen to a band like ours, since the record is being pressed at such a low quantity. But I can definitely see it as a possibility for some of the bigger punk bands .

MRR: There seems to be alot of debate recently about "activism" and its meaning, if there is one at all. Some people tend to travel around to large Anti-Globalization actions, others dress like clowns and ride tall bikes, some people raise money to fund anarchist and activist projects by putting on punk gigs. What is your take on the idea of activism, do you consider yourself activists? If so, for what reasons?

Dennis: I guess I would be considered an "activist," although I don't really like to use that word because of negative connotations from mainstream media and what I call "college activists," who generally annoy me. I guess I had better explain that one. I am tired of the kind of activism that centers around the college campus. The college activist scene doesn't really try to work in the surrounding community or on issues that most people can grasp or give a damn about. For example, you'll see flyers advertising for an open forum on neo-liberalism, which is a good idea, and is something that there should be lots of dialogue about....but most people think to themselves, "what in the hell is that?" The language is alienating and fails to connect with most people. For the most part, I find the college activist scene to be pretty self-indulgent. Protests are usually held when most people who work from 8-5 can't go to them, and people are generally self-righteous and competitive. Not that I think that college activism doesn't do any good at all, but a lot about it bothers me. In a lot of ways, I think it is good that it has become so popular to go to these large anti-globalization protests. Obviously, because the more people that go to them, the more impressive the protest looks to mainstream society. But I also see a lot of negative things about it as well. It has become very glamorous to go to these protests and be on "the front line." I think people are looking at these protests in the wrong way. These protests are seen as the great act against corporate America and all of the evils therein, and they pool all of their resources into this huge event. But when all is said and done, it takes a pretty big chunk of change to organize these things: advertisement, networking, paying to bail people out of jail, paying for lawyers, lawsuits, transportation, etc. All this for a two paragraph blurb in the local paper...or the New York Times or NPR if you are lucky....and by the time it gets to the media, the numbers of people are drastically underestimated and the protesters are usually shown in a bad light. I'm not saying that people should forget about going to these, because I myself go to them, and enjoy going to them...but think about what can be done at the local level with the resources spent. Real, concrete, positive change is more likely to happen at the local level. To me, being active means volunteering time to progressive, grassroots organizations, watching where you spend your money (how and where the products are made), or being a school teacher while trying to give your students a healthy, realistic, positive vision of life on this planet, etc. Things that you do on a normal, everyday basis. It's not so sexy, I know.

MRR: Sometimes the punk and activist worlds try to come together and sometimes they don't mesh so well together. I know that living in Colombus you must have some experience with this. What do you think it is that sometimes causes animosity between these two factions that essentially should be fighting for the same things?

Dennis: I think that punks (especially the black bloc) are generally seen as reckless and impulsive at protests and punks see many of the other (non-punk) activists as being too uptight and condescending. At different times, I can agree with both of these sides. A lot people want things done their way...but that shouldn't be what fighting for a better world is about. Of course there has to be planning, people need to learn how to work together. I think it is hilarious that the activist community is constantly fighting with itself. How are these people going revolutionize life as we know it when they are constantly caught up in shit-talking other people and gossiping?

MRR: What do you think is hc/punk's place in the anarchist and radical movements of today?

Dennis: For me, the hc/punk world and the anarchist/radical world is one in the same, they are inextricably linked. When you start a show space, you make it a collective. When you start a band, your band is a collective. When you move into a house, your house is a collective. You democratically work out problems, you discuss, you compromise. You don't try to pull power trips on people, bulldoze people over, or pull some passive-aggressive bullshit to get what you want. No one is perfect, but I try to make my ideals bleed into every aspect of my life. I don't expect everyone within the hc/punk community to be an anarchist, because this a diverse place and that's the way I like it. But I do expect people to treat others with respect. Call me p.c., I don't give a fuck.

MRR: What are the future plans for the band?

A U.S. tour this summer, between July 16th and August 6th. We will be putting out two 7"s, a 12" and one or two split 7"s. One 7" should be out by the time this interview is printed.

MRR: Do you have any closing comments?

Dennis: Eat Ethiopian food. That shit will destroy you.

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DAVE HILL DISTRIBU

The following is an interview with Jesse Edelman of Dave Hill Distribution. I first came into contact with Jesse when a handful of labels I knew kept telling me what a cool guy Jesse was. I soon started dealing with Jesse as well and discovered that besides running a great distro, he is a very down to earth and interesting character deserving of your support, so read on and learn more about one of the best DIY distros out there and the nifty chap Jesse who runs it.

MRR: Who or what is a Dave Hill, and why did you choose such a name for your distro? Another question would be, why the h-e double hockey sticks start a distro when there are so many already? In porno terms, did you perhaps see a hole that was not being properly filled?

Jesse: Well, I should start off by saying that the original name of the distro was Jack Assley Presents. That was of course short-lived as I started receiving a lot of checks made out to Jack Assley, and that is a very hard name to forge on the back of a check! I started the distro because I used to spend a lot of time reading the reviews in MRR and then ordering what I thought would be cool to check out and such. The big problem was the amount of time one had to invest to find all the records on their list. I imagined an uber-distro where one would be able to go and get everything they looking for—a one-stop-shopping place of sorts. When I started I didn't really realize there were as many distros as there really are out there...but that is OK, since I carry a lot of stuff others don't have. Anyway, I like a lot of the other guys out there (too many to mention)—great to trade with and such—it is all about fun, right?

So, on to the first question, Dave Hill was the most "punk rock" guy I knew growing up: shaved head, combat boots, straight edge, and didn't give a shit, you know the guy. So I decided to make the distro a sort of tribute to Dave...sort of to keep the idea of punk rock alive in the business. I recently actually caught up with Dave, who now lives in Austin, TX and it was pretty strange to talk about him rather than the distro—saying and hearing his name was just very bizarre—he was honored to say the least.

MRR: Among many labels you seem to have garnered a reputation for something quite unusual: paying up on the money you owe within a reasonable time frame. Is there some sort of game plan you can share for staying on top of things and out of debt there, biz whiz?

Jesse: Um, well, first off, the distro certainly does not pay my bills. I have a good day job and spend every cent from that on records for DHD. When I started I was not familiar with terms and all that. A few of the labels I started with would ask for payment up front on upon receipt...I thought that was just how it worked, so I kept it up. It just became what I did after a while and people liked it, and then I had a lot of other labels asking me if I wanted to carry their records and so on. Maybe I painted myself into a corner, but hell, I had a reputation with the labels and it was good. That made it possible for me to grow, and I just wanted to sell a lot of records. Plus, my whole philosophy is that the labels are taking a risk and distributors try to shed that risk. Returns and shit like that. I figured that I was taking a risk as well and I should carry some of that risk...it was only fair in my mind.

MRR: You are not originally from Portland; what attracted you to the punk scene back in the Midwest? What are your fond or not-so-fond memories from then, and why did you move to Portland? Was it that you were tired of wearing heavy jackets and not getting much use out of your vast sweater collection?

Jesse: Uh. OK, I grew up in East Lansing, MI, and there was a pretty good punk scene there. I actually went to school in a small town called Haslett where I was one of, oh, three "alternative" kids and I was the only one wearing combat boots. I had a lot of fun, though; since it was a college town there was a pretty diverse scene with tons of shows going on all the time. The nice part was the smallness of the scene; generally there was only one basement show on Friday and Saturday nights, so it was real easy and you always knew everyone there. There was the typical small town bullshit happening to me but I wouldn't trade it for anything. So I left...I had a shitty job and there was nothing for me in Michigan anymore, so I moved to Portland in my mid 20s. Everyone was moving on and I decided that it was my time to go as well. I found a temp job at Intel, packed my bags (sold everything else) and drove to Portland. And yeah, Portland is a much more sweater-friendly town. No heavy jackets and no snow and a much bigger punk scene. So I continue to get great use of my rare cashmere sweater collection, each handmade in small sweatshops around the world.

MRR: As a much younger punk rock teen way back when, what is the one thing you swore that you would never be doing and yet here you are doing it now?

Jesse: What in the hell kinda question is this? Of course there are a millions of things I swore I would never do and find myself doing today. Really though, I can't think of anything major. I am surprised that I have not been through a major phase of hypocrisy. A lot of the people I used to hang out with are now wearing designer clothes, listening to Limp [dick] Bizkit and living that life. This goes into a whole 'nother direction, which I will attempt to explain another day. If you want one though, I always said that I hated sports and I am now a huge hockey fan. I go to hockey games all the time up here and I find myself sometimes adjusting my schedule to be able to see a game. Kinda weird, sure, but it could be a lot worse.

MRR: There seems to be a constant glut of new releases coming out at any moment. How do you keep up with all of them and make sure that you do not end up with

TION ★ INTERVIEW BY BRIAN GTA

a bunch of titles that nobody wants?

Jesse: Agreed, that is a tough one. Sometimes you win, sometimes you lose, that's how I look at it. If I can afford to, I always try to pick up a few of everything that interests me. Keeping up with everything is impossible though. I try, but you just can't anymore. Most labels are nice enough to let you know when a new release comes out and some you have to chase around. Most of the new stuff I pick up comes from reading the reviews in MRR. I read and re-read them to find records that sound cool, or look like they might not get too much distro in the US. Then I just go from there. I do get a lot of stuff in the mail and a lot of email and I try to pick all that stuff up too, when I can afford to. Sometimes you get a great label with great releases that you can stand behind, sometimes you get crap. That goes back to risk—I just don't feel that it is very cool to buy some shit and if it doesn't sell, you send it back—really, what the fuck is that? I take that as somebody only concerned with the money. I keep it and move on, ya know?

MRR: What are some of your favorite record labels out there at the moment and why? What qualities do you think make for a good record label?

I like 'em all! Musically, if that is your question, I really like Dirtnap (have you heard the Epoxies 7" yet? Fucking great!), Rave Up, Hyped to Death...like I said, I like 'em all and I cannot single one out over any other. I do have a philosophy about the labels and bands' records that I carry, though, and that is I feel that I have to be able to stand behind the releases and the people at the label. I am not going to sell records just because they will sell; I think it's better to have integrity than money, so I try to live by that. I don't think I have made that many mistakes to date about the labels and bands that I am carrying, and that I am very proud of.

MRR: Your site has tons of tracks from the titles you offer that people can listen to. What is the purpose behind having so many free mp3s? Could this possibly backfire in that people might hear a song, not like it, and then not want to purchase a release they might have otherwise just blindly bought?

Jesse: Well, first off, it's streaming audio, and people can't just take what they want. But the idea *is* to give people the opportunity to try before they buy. I would rather have someone get the records they want rather than buy a bunch of shit they hate, and it's more fun to receive that box in the mail that way. I don't think it has backfired yet—most people are happy with it because they know they are going to get what they like. Hell, I think I have had more people tell me that they got more because they found something that they really liked that they never knew existed; which is better for the bands because the are getting their music out there.

MRR: I understand that besides your Dave Hill Distribution site, you also host some other sites—what can you tell us about them?

Jesse: Right now I am hosting four other sites on my web server (which I do myself completely out of my house). www.killedbydeath.com (a site dedicated to all that is rare and expensive), www.dickweed.org (a site just for fun, nothing there but who cares), www.iron-door.com (my girlfriend's website for all of her art) and www.grandtheftaudio.ws (home to the Grand Theft Audio record label—I'm sure that we are all familiar with that one though, right?) Coming soon will be www.antennareadio.com, which is home to some of the best internet radio on the planet (including Gift Wrapped Crap run by Scott Bass and Dirtnap Internet Radio hosted by Ken Cheppaikode at Dirtnap Records). I am willing to help anyone out there that could use some help, I don't believe that people should have to pay outrageous hosting fees or get some crappy site on Yahoo or some other shit that restricts what they do...it's all about doing it yourself to me, really.

MRR: What is the last band you witnessed live that really impressed you recently? How about the worst?

Jesse: Areosmith? Is that right? OK, to be honest I have not been out to see a bind in a quite a while. I can say that I am desperate to see the Epoxies play real soon and there was one band that I saw when I first moved here called Choobie and the Bubbles and they had, hands down, the best cover of Duran Duran's "Rio" that I ever heard...I wish I knew where they were at today. There have been a lot of shows and all of them enjoyable. I am always impressed when I get to see a band live. I have seen a lot of shitty bands, but I can't remember any of their names, because they were shitty.

MRR: Before we bring this think tank meeting (cough) to a close, are there any final pearls of wisdom that you would like to bestow upon us, or just some junk you'd like to plug?

Jesse: Nothing more than my website to plug: www.davehill.org. I would like to say this, running a distro has been the single best experience of my life! I have met so many of the coolest people in the world and I'm having the time of my life. I would recommend to anyone out there that wants to get involved to just go out there and do it; with all the great people out there to support you even if you don't make it, there is still so much out there to experience.

• C O N T A C T •

DAVE HILL DISTRIBUTION

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HOLIER THAN THOU?

Holier Than Thou? are a thrash skate-core band from Santa Barbara, CA. This interview was conducted at Kevin's house in Downtown SB, while those present played Grand Theft Auto 3 on the ever-so-distracting Play Station 2, in various states of inebriation, so please take all of that into consideration as you read. In attendance (aside from the members of HTT?) were Joe Gonzales of Uphill Battle, Jamie S. of Fields of Fire, Joesus Heist of Cropcircle, and Geoff Reil of Further Notice. The interview was conducted by Chuck Fuck Franco.

MRR: Name, rank, and serial number please…
Noel: 18 and I play drums.
Kevin: 31 and I play bass.
DR: 28 and I pretend to sing.
Jeff (Capra): I play guitar.
MRR: How did Holier? come together?
Kevin: It was pretty rad for me. I teach and I was in class one day and Noel (my student at the time) came up to me and asked me what I was doing that night! I was kind of taken aback and asked why, and Noel snapped back, "Wanna play some rockin jams?" That's how I got involved with the whole thing.
DR: Prior to that, Noel and Jeff were jamming…
Jeff: Alright, let me tell that story. Basically, Noel had a studio and we had a lot of time on our hands. We had nothing to do at 8:00, so we would just go down there and play music.
MRR: So, you had a studio and you would write songs and…
Jeff: Chuck, you know damn well that we had a studio! (laughter from all, since Chuck's band shared this studio with HTT?)
MRR: Hey, I'm just trying to do an interview here!
DR: Anyway, Jeff and I were housemates at that time and we were sitting around one night talking about the good old days of the scene that we had grown up in. I don't try to get too deep—I have other projects that I save the more political stuff for, this is just a fun skate-rock band—it's supposed to be just more about daily life and stuff like that.
MRR: I mean, come on! You guys have songs about skating...
Noel: DR writes lyrics and songs sometimes, and it's like, OK, we don't really like that, and we'll throw it away. Then he'll write a song that we all like…
DR: I'll write a song and they'll be like, Nope, you're not singing about that, and then I'll just end up writing about something more universal.
Jeff: You see, with Noel, Kevin and me it's a lot like being on a major label…we tell you what to do!
Noel: Oh boy!
DR.: On the other hand, it's kind of like a don't ask, don't tell policy…like, if they actually *did* take the time to read the lyrics, then they probably would have vetoed *all* of em!

MRR: What inspires you to write the lyrics that you do keep?
DR: Well…usually they're just about real life situations that come up…like, something That's going on in my life at the time, or something that is plaguing my mind and I have to get it out…and then sometimes they're just stupid, fun lyrics, where I pretend that I'm 14 again and all I care about is skating…a lot of the lyrics are written while I'm at work,…an idea will pop into my head, and I'll start jotting down these random thoughts on a notepad while I'm working, and then come back to them later and finalize them. When they do come from an incident that has just occurred, and they're supposed to just reflect that isolated instance, it can be kinda shitty sometimes…because you end up making what sounds like this huge sweeping statement, and it's really only supposed to be about one person or event…but it sounds like this ridiculous generalization about *all* people or a whole phenomenon…like with "Nation of Liars."
MRR: OK, so do any of you guys actually skate?
Kevin: I still do, but not nearly as often as I used to. After countless injuries I have had over the years, and getting old, it's hard! When you go out Skater s Point (local skate park) and they want you to wear all these pads…I don't want to get into trouble for breaking some shitty rules …Plus I know if I eat shit I'll be fucking worked!
DR: I do a little street skating almost every day, but I've been going to the park *a lot* lately and even though I haven't been eating it that hard I'm still sore as hell! we're old…Capra's supposed to be pretty good, but I can t get him to ever go with me.
MRR: You guys got any favorite injuries, skate tales, broken bones?
Jeff: No broken bones.
Kevin: One of the raddest was at my house. My friend and I had this quarter-pipe and we had to move it from his house to my house and back and forth, 'cause his parents were pissed about it being in their front yard, in their driveway, and then it would reverse. So, one day it was in my friend's driveway and I saw his mom driving down the street, so I decided I was gonna go fly up and turn around and do a board-slide-acid-drop-back-in …I was really gonna do a disaster, but it was before anyone knew what the fuck a disaster was. I went up the transition and as soon as I turned around I did like a double back-flip, landed with my arms behind my back like Superman, and landed with my chin on the concrete. I got up and I thought I was just shaken up, only my head was kind of out-of-whack and I was looking at my friend and he has this look of astonishment on his face…right when I saw him do that I put my hand on my chin and got a handful of blood. I had just gone to the Emergency the week before and knew my mom would be *pissed*, so I had to sneak by her when she was making dinner. I went into the bathroom and saw that my chin was hanging out. My chin was *broken* and it was wide open! Anyway, I saw that I was worked and went and told my mom, "We gotta go to Emergency again, sorry."
MRR: Second time that week?
Kevin: Too many times in the emergency room. They stitched it back together and it was all good.
MRR: Anyone else?
Jeff: The closest thing to a broken bone is the band playing behind me.
MRR: Is it painful?
Jeff: Excruciating.
DR: So we're playing *behind* you now, huh? Hitting my nuts on handrails is probably the most painful injury that I've sustained…no broken bones or anything. I've dislocated stuff.
MRR: The good old credit card . OK, Rodney Mullen or Tommy Guerrero?
Noel: Mullen.
DR: Mullen.
Noel: Tommy is cool, but he just goes fast down hills.
Kevin: But he's got style.
MRR: Exactly though…soul or tech?
Jeff: It all goes back to Jay Adams.
Kevin: I think they're all rad in their own light…I like em all!
Noel: I think Gator is cool because he killed his girlfriend. (OUCH! Laughter all around)
DR: Yeah, That's raaad! (super sarcastic)
Noel: One of Adams' excuses was media influence. (Mr. Adams is currently serving time for drug charges) He thought no one liked him anymore…
DR: But doesn't it seem like that was just a part of his defense? Like in the whole criminal trial process or whatever? I don't really think that he ever really believed that.
Jeff: He's still Jay Adams.
DR: What about Natas Kaupas?…or Mark Gonzales?…or Ron Allen?…those guys were fucking pioneers!…and my favorite will always be Bill Danforth…just raw aggression…totally fearless! And Aaron Murray too…every trick at maximum speed…missing half a finger!
MRR: OK, OK…How did you get hooked up with Six Weeks to do the 7" and the full-length records?
Jeff: We played in San Francisco and he (Jeff Robinson) was there and remembered us well enough to call us the next day and ask if we wanted to do a record.
Kevin: He emailed us about a month after the show, actually, but who's paying attention to details?
Noel: We played and this crazy-looking long-haired dude came up to us and said, You guys are fuckin *rad*!
DR: He bought our demo and a t-shirt offa me at the show, and I was like, "Who is this guy? He's *way* too old to be in this scene!" He's one of the few people I know who are older than Kevin (ooh…) So, he's got long hair and glasses and looks like some old metal-head, and I was kind of trippin on him…
Kevin: Out of the blue I got an email. He said he saw us that night and that we might remember him. He said, I was pestering you for contact information. He said he had listened to the demo like 30 times and he wanted to put out a 7" to get the word out about us, then do a full-length.
DR: He also included a description of himself to

remind us of who he was…it was something like "the long-haired geeky guy with glasses!" I love it!

MRR: So he was stoked on you guys and he didn t even know you?

ALL: Pretty much.

Jeff: Plus he could make a million bucks on the whole thing.

MRR: You guys are the Big Ticket then?

Jeff: Oh yeah…next week our record is scheduled to be bar-coded for record stores like The Wherehouse!

Kevin: By the bucket loads!

MRR: I know that three out of four of you guys have been in the scene for a long time. What do you think of the current state of hardcore? What keeps you going all these years?

DR: I don't really go to enough shows to make a judgment…I was getting kinda sour on it a few years back!

Kevin: I've always enjoyed it. Back when I was young I was going to shows constantly. I've been down with it the entire time, but I'm in a situation now where I have to work every morning at 6 AM, and I have to teach and profess shit and it's tough, so I can't be out…(interrupted by laughter) .

DR: Did you say that you profess?

Kevin: Yeah, Jackass! At least I have a degree for the shit I spew.

DR: Hey, I have a degree too, but I'm not going to use it to defend the shit I spew …Work gets in the way of going to shows for me too, but a few years ago I decided that it had all gotten to be pretty redundant anyway. Maybe I just don't understand the style that was dominant as much musically? I don't know. It just seems like I used to go to shows when I was younger and there would be an Oi! Band, a straight-edge band, a 77-style band, and some crazy crossover skate-thrash band all on the same bill! Nowadays you go to a show and it's a crust show, or it's a sXe show, or it's this or that. It just became all of these little cliques and it was like…there just got to be *way* too much factionalization in hardcore! I would see the same 20 kids at the Living Room (local all ages club) at every straight-edge show that I went to there, and a different 20 kids at every crust show…

Jeff: You just see the same 20 kids at *every* Living Room show.

DR: Yeah, maybe, but not really…people weren't even crossing into other sub-genres anymore a couple of years ago, they just stuck with their own little clique...like, you were emo or you were indie, but you couldn't be a little of both, oh no, God forbid!. Hopefully that's starting to change though. It just seems like punk isn't even an umbrella that holds it all together at this point. it's so factionalized by petty details even though like 90% of their politics are the same…then there's like one item, or article of clothing, or some piece of food that you ate... Good God!…and there are actually people brawling over this shit!

Jeff: I don't go to as many shows. I choose not to. There are other things that I find more fulfilling than going to every show. I think the current state of DIY is fine, I just have changed my opinions on things along the line. I think the same message is there as when I got into it.

MRR: Is it just from getting older? Being in the scene too much?

Jeff: I've just seen too many new kids, and it's like, you graduate from high school, then your friends move away to college, then you graduate from college and you move away from the punk scene. That's how it is in Santa Barbara, a college town. If you're here for more than five years then all of your friends are gone. A part of going to shows was to hang out with your friends, and I feel like I keep getting older and the kids keep getting younger. That's fine, but I don't have as much in common with those kids…not even band or music taste-wise. It's kind of a bummer to see kids come and go in the matter of a year. The kids you saw at a show a year ago don't even go to shows now. It gets disheartening. It seems like, why get that involved when you know that the amount of time that people are involved in the scene gets shorter and shorter? You get kind of disappointed in that, so why not spend more time skateboarding or playing music instead of going and watching a bunch of bands?

MRR: I call that the Santa Barbara Syndrome .

Jeff: Yeah, SB is too expensive of a town for people to move into…you know, the same people.

Noel: I get bummed on it because I see it as an escape from reality for me, and the punk and HC scene has become a mirror of the bullshit I try to escape…

Jeff: Punk has always been the same bullshit! If it's not a fashion; then it's just another sub-set! Just because you listen to Discharge doesn't make you a better person, and when you get older you realize that it's just the same thing. There's no difference between you and football players except that they go to football games and you go to hardcore shows…it's just something to do.

DR: Well, I disagree with *most* of that…I think that there *are* some important differences…I just get bummed that for some people it has to be that way, for the sake of simplicity or whatever. Listening to certain kinds of music doesn't automatically make you a better person, but I hope that this scene is about something more than football is! I mean, *this* band might be just for shits and giggles for the most part, but the scene as a whole *does* have lasting importance to some people! I mean, some people do stick with it. I'm just bummed that there aren't more! Probably 60% of the Santa Barbara hardcore scene over the age of 25 is in this room right now! There aren't very many people my age (and especially not many women) that are still active in the scene…Kent McClard, John Lyons, me, Geoff, and Kevin…That's about it! I guess that you could count the guys in RKL, but half of them don't even live here, so…for me it's sort of like Jeff said, but it's not even people coming and going as much as just the feeling of. Why isn't this of lasting importance to more people? For me it definitely is! I've been into this stuff most of my life, and I don't plan on getting out of it any time soon!

Jeff: And I don't think how old you are or how into it you are has anything to do with how many shows you go to, especially for people like Kevin who have to go to work early every morning. I have a girlfriend with a three year-old, and I find it more fulfilling to hang out with her! It's really fun to take her to shows, but some nights I don't want to go to shows! Sometimes I want to sit around, and make dinner, and do all of the things that I never thought I would do.

MRR: Stop being a teenager?

Jeff: I mean, you can't always live at home and you can't always just scrape by! It's not fun for me to barely scrape by!

MRR: What sorts of things do you do outside of the band?

DR: I'm a machinist…I make high-precision parts for medical and scientific apparatuses, like microscopes and telescopic cameras and shit. I also enjoy skateboarding, motorcycles, and video games…

Jeff: I work for a rock merchandising company, so I am The Man! We do like old punk band merchandising…it's really fun! It's fun to meet the people that were in the bands that I grew up listening to. It's fun to call them up and try to get their old t-shirt designs. It's also fun because I work unsupervised, and it's punk in the way that it's run.

DR: My bosses are also incredibly cool…they're my buddies! One of my bosses is a total pirate and is in the process of sailing around the world! My other boss is a very serious musician and is totally stoked that I play music too, so he's very flexible about my weird scheduling needs and shit.

Noel: I'm a student.

MRR: What's your major?

Many Voices: The Ganj! Reefer! Chronic Studies! (extreme laughter)

Noel: I'm just going because I can get covered on my dad's insurance…sounds good enough.

(Kevin is out of the room temporarily, so DR answers for him)

DR: Kevin's an educator…he also is a major motorcycle enthusiast, in fact we rode all over the country together last summer for 28 days…in addition to that he is a Sony Play Station junky! Also, all four of us are in other bands.

Noel: Yeah, if you ever need to figure out your rent or bills or anything like that, take it to Kevin at one of our shows and he'll figure it out for you.

DR: What Noel's stoned ass is trying to say is that Kevin is a mathematician.

MRR: Any particular bands that influence you, past or present?

Jeff: You don't even want to open that can…we'll be here all night!

MRR: Well, what bands keep you motivated and playing your style?

ALL: RKL.

MRR: Those guys are old, just like all of you!

DR: To see those guys still out there doing it, to see Dr. Know still out there doing it…it's encouraging.

Noel: I don't think those bands are doing anything good today, but what they did originally was awesome!

DR: I'm just stoked that those guys are still going, despite the fact that they might be married, divorced, have kids, whatever…they still want to play shows in a little dive to stoke-out young and old punk kids…that motivates me. Some of the bands that have been coming back are just kind of lame though…A lot of *newer* bands are beginning to stoke me out! We'll be playing a show with some brand new band that I've never heard of before and I'll be like, those guys are fucking rad! A lot more diversity lately. Maybe we're shifting away from the trend of homogeneity that I have been so bummed on these last five years. Some of the bands that I've been introduced to through the label (Six Weeks) are also encouraging…it seems like there's a *lot* goin on internationally…I don't know if it's just our little scene that's been kinda stagnating or what. Mostly I get stoked when I hear stuff from Europe or Japan.

Jeff: It seems like every four or five years the scene goes through a rebirth and everyone gets stoked on a sound or some sort of revival. Not every one of those has been great…Who knows how long the thrash one will last? We play what we play just because that's what we have always wanted to play. I wasn't old enough to play in a band back in '86, but it's not like my interest in playing in that kind of band has disappeared. But if it's a total trend just like the bandana thrash thing, then it will go out and a new one will come in.

DR: Actually, my first band *was* back in '86, and we very much wanted to be a skate-punk band, but we sucked, and never even made it outta the garage…I've been in all sorts of bands, punk and otherwise, and will continue to play in other bands, but this definitely is a style that I grew up on and that I will never get sick of. When we started, we thought that nobody would get it—that we would be the only people who liked it, and we didn't care! We were doing it for ourselves, solely for our own enjoyment and our own nostalgic purposes…it was a shock to all of us that a thrash trend came about right at the same time that we started doing shows!

Noel: I just wish that people would start playing traditional metal again…like straight-up speed metal.

Jeff: Black metal, like Venom or Bathory.

DR: Fucking Vikings and shit!

Jeff: Or if kids would actually learn their instruments and play new wave, or British heavy metal.

MRR: Who has done the artwork for the band?

Noel: We are all into tattoos, so we usually have tattoo artists do our artwork.

Jeff: I've done a lot of lettering, but none of the artwork.

Kevin: Ryan Van Aken is a really good artist who has done some really good pieces on me and probably all of us at this point…he drew the first cover for the self-titled 7".

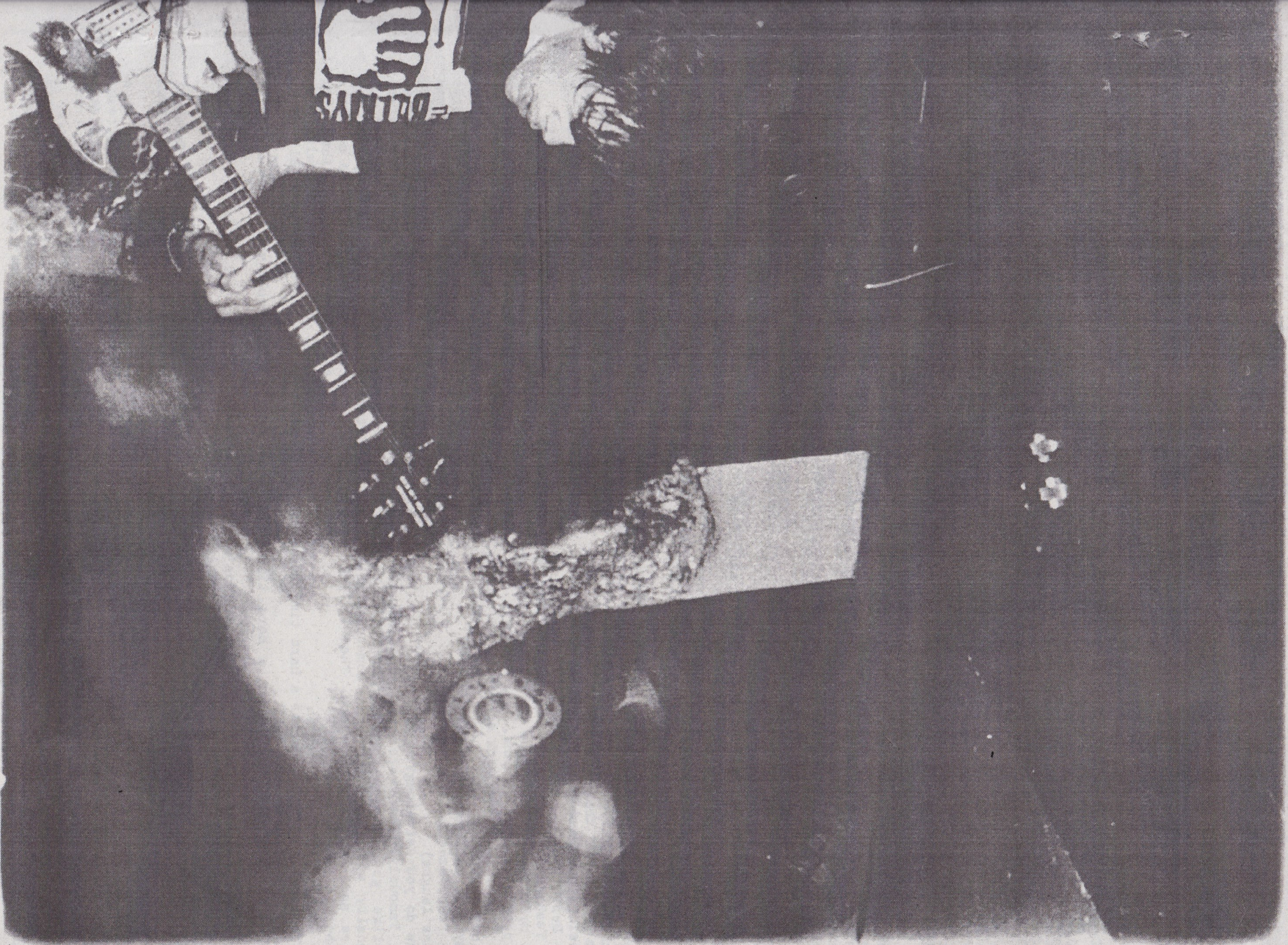
DR: Sebastian Orth did the cover for *The Hating of the Guts*…he's in the middle of a Japanese-style piece that covers my right thigh.

Noel: He would have worked on me if I'd had my ID!

MRR: What's your crowd-pleaser? It seems like it's "Rat Patrol" here in the (805).

Jeff: Yeah, I guess I would say that…what did every-

one want to hear in San Francisco?
Kevin: "It's a Crime," but we kind of think that song's lame.
MRR: You guys have your own style. Who writes the music? Where does it come from?
Jeff: RKL.
DR: Jeff writes the music initially on guitar, then usually he and Noel jam on it first, and then he and Kevin work out what they are each going to play differently and together, like what the bass is going to do and all of that, and we all give Noel ideas too…everybody kind of shares input on each other's part, but not too much…I don't know, it just flows pretty much.
Jeff: I dictate.
DR: Lyrically he has absolutely *no* input except for the right to veto a song altogether. I write all of the lyrics and vocal parts…not that they are amazing melodies or complex harmonies or anything.
MRR: Back to the Santa Barbara issue…why do you think that it fluctuates so much?
DR: Hardercore than thou for a year or two and then it's time to get a real job.
Jeff: That, or some new girl steps in front of them and they change to a different scene…or they find that there are no girls involved in the SB scene and they go somewhere else. You can t really say that's a bad thing, because some people think they might find some companionship in the scene and there just isn't any of that in SB.
Kevin: I think it moves in cycles…like, one year people will be down and doing a lot of shows and a lot of bands will be playing and people going out and doing shit, and then there are a dry spells and it's dead again…then people will see that RKL is playing and say, Wow, That's rad! Remember back then?
Jeff: Then the Dead Kennedys get back together…then they see that there's no *money* in punk rock…(laughter)
MRR: You all have (with the exception of Noel) steady jobs, but do you still find it hard to get by in SB?
DR: Shevbot (Kevin) is rollin' in dough! But really, I have had almost had to move in with my folks a couple of times recently…I don't make enough money to live in SB.
MRR: That would be kind of weird, being 28.
DR: Yeah…sometimes I look at what I'm doing and I wonder if I'm doing the right thing, like if I'm just fucking myself by staying young and having fun …because sometimes it's *not* fun!…Life can be a fuckin *drag* when you ve got a million different creditors breaking down your door and your parents are constantly telling you that it's time to grow up…but when I really think about it, I realize that this is exactly what I want to be doing! I look at the people that I went to college with, who were down for going to shows and all of that, and now they are completely tied down with their jobs and their kids. Maybe they are happy and feel totally fulfilled by that, but I'm not seeing it, and I don't think that I ever would be. I never want to be a lawyer or a doctor, with my whole life based around my work!
MRR: How about you, Jeff?
Jeff: I don't think that I'm really tied down with the family. I thought the same thing as DR, but maybe it's the person I'm with that can allow me to be here right now instead of putting a little girl to sleep. I feel tied down by work because I feel pretty much tied to work because I have to pay rent, I have to buy food, and not buying anything for Christmas isn't really an option when you have a 2 year-old…I get breaks from work and I can play shows…I don't take my work home with me.
DR: But I'm not talking about you, you understand? You sort of have both, and it's more balanced. I'm talking about having to give up one for the other.
MRR: What do you see in store for 2002?
Jeff: Five shows! (laughter)
DR: Two practices and two records!
Kevin: Every song made up in the studio…five minutes before recording.
MRR: Is that it?
DR: If we don't kill each other first, we're trying to organize two weeks of shows on the East Coast this summer (probably in July)…we're probably going to do a split on Six Weeks and a 10 or 12 with this label out of Canada…we wanted to go to Japan, but the East Coast Tour is much more realistic for us right now…we want to do the split with a Japanese band and then go tour Japan in Summer 2003...if we can pull it off financially. We really need people *in* Japan to help us organize that, so please spread the word!
Jeff: Yeah, we have a choice between buying a van and buying a plane…I mean, to see Holier Than Thou? emblazoned on the side of a 747 would be pretty cool. (laughter)
MRR: Anyone you guys want to thank, or last words?
Kevin: Jeff and Athena at Six Weeks and Mordam for the distro. We ve had people contact us from Serbia, Portugal, Poland…and other places I would never think of hearing from.
Jeff: Yeah, we're reeling in the cash! Thanks!
Noel: Oh yeah! Thanks to all of the people who came up to me when I was in Lifes Halt and asked about HTT?
DR: Thanks to you, Chucky, for doing this interview, and everyone at MRR for putting it out! Is that too much ass kissing? Oh well…bye.
Contact: whoisholier@aol.com



THE BELL RAYS PHOTO BY: ANDREW WINGLER

KILL DEVIL

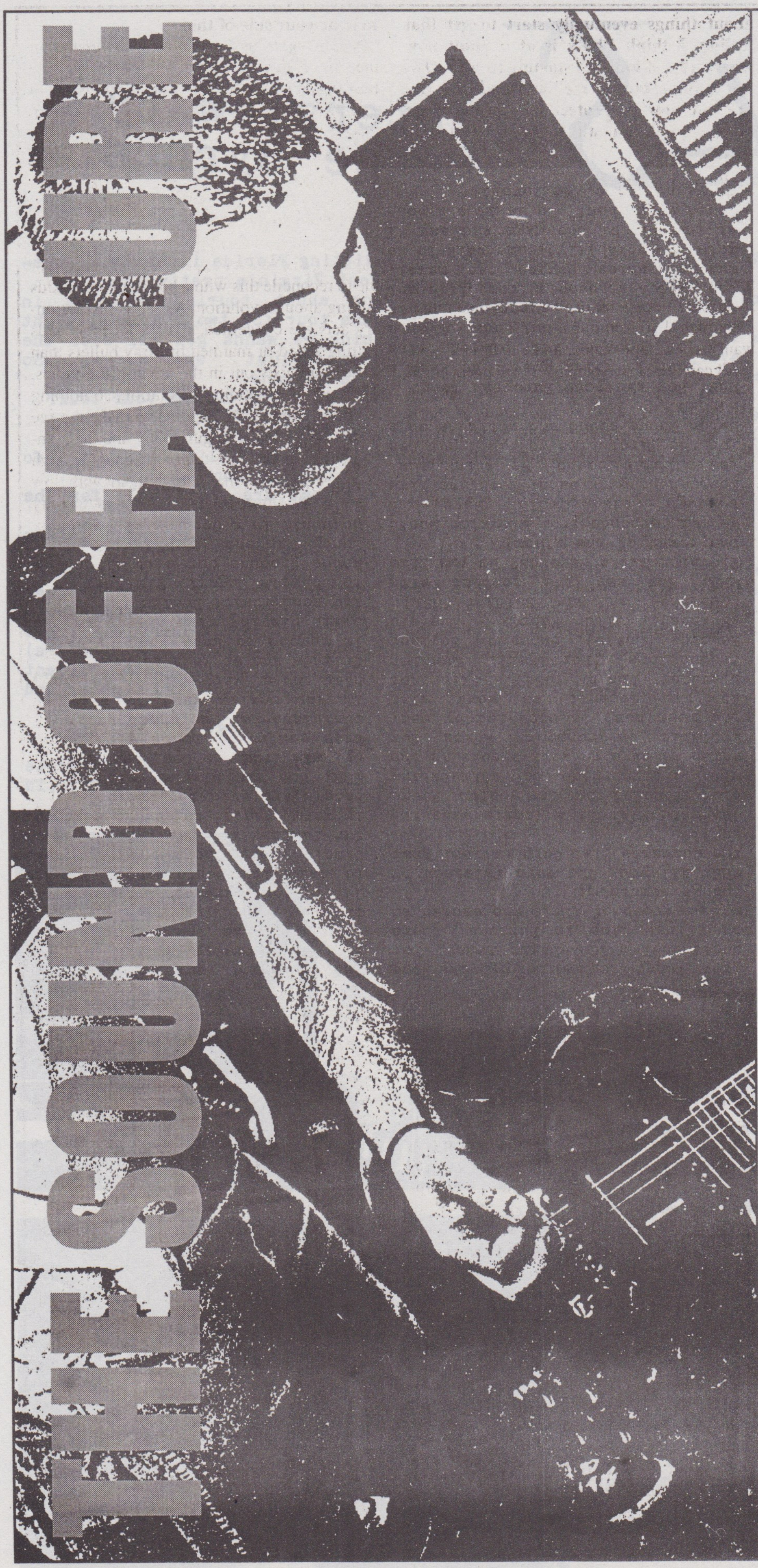
MRR: OK, what are your names and what do you do?
Travis: My name is Travis and I play drums and I'm a, uh, recording engineer and concert promoter.
Andrew: I'm Andrew, and I play bass. And I stare at a computer.
Chris: Yeah I do the same thing, but I play guitar. I stare at a computer in a cubicle.
Andrew: Me, too.
Chris: With fluorescent lights.
Andrew: Me, too.
MRR: What did you call it?
Chris: I call it a rat box.
Andrew: No, a cubicle commando.
MRR: How long has the band been together, and how did you start?
Travis: Two and a half years. Andrew saw me at the radio station and said hey...
Andrew: No, I actually saw him in class at college...
Travis: OK.
Andrew: And I asked him if he would play drums. I saw Chris at a movie theater and asked him if he wanted to play guitar. We just got together and started playing. It was supposed to be new-a trial band-and it just clicked, so no new members. Nobody has gotten kicked out...
Travis: That was around Halloween of '97...no, '98.
Chris: Me and Andrew kind of had a lot of mutual friends at the time, and, uh, so we kinda knew each other.
MRR: Do you think that not really knowing each other before has been good for you as a band?
Travis: Definitely.
Chris: Yeah, we didn't have any baggage coming into it because we didn't know each other well at all as people or as musicians.
Andrew: I think that can work or really be a disaster, but it worked, so...
MRR: Maybe it will keep working.
Andrew: Yeah, except I hate Travis.
(everyone laughs)
MRR: How do you get along?
Andrew: Famously. There are rare occasions...we never like get in fist fights or anything. Occasionally words are said and somebody gets defensive and someone might yell. Then we just talk about it and it's over.
Travis: Nobody yells.
Chris: We like to give each other a hard time but I think we get along really well.
MRR: What do you give each other a hard time about?
Travis: Chris doesn't like one of my friends' bands, so that upsets me. He made a comment during practice once, and it really ticked me off, and I wouldn't look at him the rest of the practice.
(Chris laughs). I just played really hard.
Chris: Yeah but he played really well.
Andrew: We try to make him mad before every show.
MRR: Do you consider yourselves to be people with similar interests or to be different from each other?
Andrew: We're very different people.
Travis: We just kinda have an understanding for each other, I guess.
Chris: Yeah, I think there's a mutual respect. We don't have all the same ideas about life and the world, but that's good. I think we, or at least I can speak for myself-I think it's been good for me to hang out and be friends with a bunch of people that aren't exactly like me.
MRR: OK, let's get to the music. What would you generally say your music is about?
Andrew: Just experience.
MRR: What kind of experiences?
Travis: Traveling.
Andrew: Yeah, a lot of traveling, a lot of frustration songs. If you read the lyrics, they're not mean. They're just real bitter. I only really write lyrics when I'm extremely angry, you know? Either at relationships...
Travis: At a show...
Andrew: Somebody cancels a show, and we show up to it, and there's no show.
Travis: Bands breaking up...
Andrew: Who?
Travis: Your old band breaking up... Five Sixty-Five.
Andrew: Oh, yeah. Just, bad experiences make the best lyrics.
Travis: I wrote a song about people getting to college and the change they go through when they get there. Sometimes it's for the better and sometimes it's for the worst
All: What song is that?
Travis: "Two Steps." It's like how people show up and don't know what they're all about, then they go a little crazy for a while until they finally figure out that this is what I'm all about.
MRR: So it's more like personal experiences?
Chris: Yeah, I think everything's about experiences that we have and how we react to them...what we do with them.
Andrew: People that we like and dislike, or a little bit of both. Like "Eric," which is about Eric from Asschapel. He was my old roommate, and it was one of those situations where I have to wake up at like 7:00 am and go do stuff all day. He doesn't do *anything* but sleep till one in the afternoon and you know, I wake up and he's still up and just like staring out the window. He's not even doing anything because he has nothing to do. It's not a bad song about him; it's just that, you know, I wanna do what he does, but I couldn't at the time and I still can't. So it's all about experiences.
MRR: What kind of music would you say it is, then?
Andrew: Music to listen to.
Chris: We're just a rock band. Somebody called us emo-core once on a flyer.
Andrew: They called us trashy punk.
Chris: "Melodic pop-punk." That was the farthest off. We've been called "screamy punk from Tennessee."
Andrew: I think the whole thing is that we're a band; we just play music that we like. We scream. It's rock music. There you are... music to give a chance to.
MRR: For all those new listeners out there...
Andrew: I mean, we're gonna be classified as whatever people want, but it doesn't matter because everybody has different classifications.

HILLS

Interview by Renee Byrnes

Chris: We're not a message band. We're not trying to preach any kind of agenda. We just sing about our experiences in our lives, and that's how we express ourselves.
Travis: We kinda switch up parts a little bit. We have straight punk parts, then we have just kinda heavy screamy parts, and then we'll go to some softer parts. So it's just kinda a bunch of parts.
Chris: We're parts-core. (everyone laughs)
Travis: Go to Auto-Zone and pick up our parts express or something.
Andrew: Now we should go into the Travis-isms.
MRR: What is a Travis-ism?
Andrew: Sometimes Travis says these really weird statements. He's probably getting mad right now, but he just says these things that only make sense to him. He always knows when he says them because Chris and I look at each other and there's this dead silence.
Travis: I think they're funny. I guess I'm just amusing myself.
Andrew: They *are* funny. They're Travis-isms.
Chris: We love his Travis-isms. It's part of the whole package.
MRR: OK, so what are you looking at for the future? Do you have any new releases coming up?
Andrew: We have a full-length coming out mid-June. I started a label with my roommate Brooksie, and it's called Honest in Secret. We're gonna do a thousand run and just see how it goes...brand new label, so we're gonna be trying to get distro if anybody's reading this.
Travis: We're also gonna be on a comp that's coming out pretty soon: *Murk-ta Geekmonger Music, Volume 2* is the name of the comp. Our song "Relevant Questions" is gonna be on there with like twenty other bands.
MRR: Where's that coming from?
Andrew: Lafayette, Indiana.
Chris: Pez from Memphis was on the first one.
Andrew: So we have the full-length, 1 3 songs, that's gonna be out.
Travis: It's not a Fugazi record.
Chris: We're gonna call it the "36-Minute Struggle."
MRR: What about touring? Do you play out of town a lot?
Chris: We play out of town a lot more often than we play here.
Travis: Our first two shows were out-of-town shows: Montevallo, Alabama, and then Florence, Alabama the next night. We played Murfreesboro the night after that, so we played three shows in a row our first time out. Right from the start the band was set as a band who wants to get out and just do something, and that was kinda the precedent from the beginning.
MRR: Where do you usually go when you play away from home?
Travis: We've played like 92 shows since we started. We're having a big bash for our hundredth show. We've played as far north as Chicago, as far south as Auburn, Alabama.
Andrew: You'll probably need to look on a map for that one.
Travis: The main states we've played are Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, Alabama, Georgia, and Tennessee. We're hitting Florida in June and hopefully we'll hit West Virginia pretty soon.
Andrew: The thing about touring is that in October, we're gonna tour for two months straight just because I think we wanna get all over the country and Canada-just everywhere. So October/November, we're gone.
MRR: Where all are you going during your tour?
Andrew: It's not booked yet, but *everywhere*.
MRR: Who's doing the booking?
Andrew: Right now, me. There'll be contact info at the end if you'd like to book a show.
MRR: Finally, then, what are your goals for the band?
Chris: We wanna travel, and I think we've gotten to the point where we can do it.
Andrew: All we want to do is this band because, I mean, what would you rather do? This is the best option for us. It's the most fun. The goal is to not have a home because I don't want one right now. I want to come stay in your (the reader's) basement. I want you to cook me spaghetti. I want to sleep on your couch for one to two nights, and then I'll be moving on.
Travis: We'll even pet your dog.

For more information about Kill Devil Hills, write them c/o Travis: PO Box 11068, Murfreesboro,TN 37129, www.killdevilhills.org



The Sound of Failure is a punk band from Philadelphia known for going against the grain. Despite a commitment to individuality, the band has become a lightening rod for many within the city's expansive scene where free-thinking and intimacy are often the most important goals. Far from being the ordinary punk band, The Sound of Failure deals with a host of topics truly threatening and truly honest to the point of vulnerability. In a heyday of posi-core revival, the band is one of the darkest to be found, without resorting to bullshit imagery, satanic overtones, or lyrical ambiguity, and without sacrificing ethics. Guitarist/singer Joe Gough answered these questions just weeks before the band's Distress Signal 7" EP was released from When Humans Attack, a new Philadelphia-based record label run by Lost Film Festival conspirator Skot Beaudin. This month, the band also celebrated the release of a split 7" with fellow Philadelphians The Great Clearing Off. In June, The Sound of Failure will head out on a US tour with Washington DC/Richmond, VA's Del Cielo. Interview by Mike McKee.

MRR: Philly's had a sizable scene for years now. But, it's been inconsistent and sometimes downright exclusionary. You weren't one of Stalag 13's darling bands like Dis Sucks or the Boils or Kill the Man Who Questions. But now, I think a lot of people value your band as one of the most important in the city. How has this played into The Sound of Failure?

We were fast and screamy when everybody was really metal. When most bands were "emo," we were really fast and messy and kids got into it because nobody else sounded like that. We all went to shows in Philly, but for whatever reason, every time I asked those guys if we could play Stalag, there was some excuse. I understand that they were booked up, but still, it was kind of off-putting. So we just did our own shit and started playing basement shows. Now we've played at 4040 and the Rotunda and the Church (major venues in Philly), so we sort of straddle two different scenes. There are your regular kids that go to shows, but there are a lot of kids here that just go out to basement shows. I'm glad we get to play for and meet those kids and play with their bands and stuff.

MRR: Do you feel like you and your band are part of a community?

We are in the sense that we all have friends who are in other bands and that put on shows and do labels and all this cool stuff, but we are also part of something that isn't really so outwardly definable, where kids are just checking out all kinds of different bands and ideas without really committing themselves.

MRR: What are your impressions of the Philadelphia scene now?

In the last few years, there have been big bands from here that were doing cool things, but they have almost all either turned to shit or broken up, or both like Ink&Dagger. Franklin is gone, I Hate You is gone... There are still bands from here that play, but they are kind of more appreciated outside of the city, like Kill the Man Who Questions or Rambo. The bands that are

important to me here because they play here every week are a little more obscure—bands like the Great Clearing Off, Affirmative Action Jackson, Fire Down Below, James Love Jackson (no relation to Affirmative Action...) Then there is a whole other group of bands that are far more experimental like Captain Crash, Myles of Destruction.

MRR: Most of The Sound of Failure's lyrics are personal, but the band often plays politicized shows and benefits in the city. Do you consider The Sound of Failure a political band?

We are not a political band. I like to play benefit shows in town and I wish more of our hometown shows were benefits. Lyrically, I will only sing lyrics that come from my own personal experiences. It's angry, fucked up music, and what we sing about is dead serious and very important to me. But I'd be insane to think that people are going to use what I say as some kind of guideline for how to live life or change things. I am just kind of working out my own doubts and insecurities in a very public forum.

MRR: I don't think anyone looks to bands for rules. But to say there's nothing to be drawn politically from the music and performances of bands like The Sound of Failure is unfair. When I watch SOF play, I feel very alive, alive outside 'the box' and I think that's very liberating for people. I'd say that's political.

I wouldn't say there shouldn't be a connection, but people have to step back and remember what caught their attention—99.9% of the time it was a aesthetic, be it loud angry music, fucked-up hair and clothing. I remember seeing pictures of old punk shows, and what made me want to see punk bands was not political, it was just that these guys looked pissed off and frustrated and they were geeks just like me. I didn't give a shit what they were saying: they sounded as scared and confused and pissed as I was when I was in ninth grade

MRR: At a point, I think punk becomes about more than that. It becomes a representation of a desire for more, a desire to take that frustration and direct it somewhere—hopefully against the forces making us all so confused and pissed and shit. Not everyone wants to "Squat EuroDisney," but I always saw punk and politics being closely tied, because to me, both represent that life-outside-the-box vitality.

I think that is up to kids themselves. I guess I still feel "punk" is still about the alienation I feel from "normal" people and their aspirations and values. I have all these ideals where I try to support smaller businesses and stuff—all these ideals I consider to be "punk," but at the same time, a lot of the punk scene is as much about social status and bullshit as anything else. I still feel that "life outside the box" feeling, but more and more of the punk scene seems to be part of "the box." I could feel as alienated at a hardcore show as I would in a Microsoft office. (T- fucking-M).

MRR: I think most people who are serious about things eventually start to get that feeling. I think Philly is at a point now where a lot of kids are starting to say, "OK, this is important to me" and trying to figure out how to protect and support the piece of punk that still holds something for them.

Well, that's how I've been able to stay involved in punk music. The circle of people I relate to is very small, and it keeps shrinking. It's hard to keep interested in the same rehashed shit year after year, but I'm not ready for the rockabilly retirement plan, or the indie rock retirement plan, or the electronica retirement plan. I still go to basement shows, I still want to hear new bands, and I feel lucky that I still care, because so many of my peers could give a shit about shows unless it's a Mouthpiece reunion. I have always been focused on my own shit. That has helped me stay sort of independent of the people around me.

MRR: One issue you deal a lot with seems to be mental health. Frankly, I find "Distress Signal" more impactful than even Black Flag's "Depression." I don't think I've ever experienced this condition personally, but I know it affects a lot of lives, and a lot of lives in the overall punk scene. Why do you think we hear so little about it?

People don't want to talk about mental health issues. If you suffer clinical depression, you will feel stigma. I have dealt with serious depression for more than half of my life at this point. It's always hard to explain to a new friend why you won't come out of your house for two weeks at a time. People just don't generally have a response to that. If they do, it's usually a shitty one. There is nothing like being told by otherwise intelligent and understanding people that you "need to just cheer up." After ten years of hell, you just don't need to hear that. You don't hear about it because people aren't ready to hear about it.

MRR: "Horsham Clinic" deals directly with the idea of treatment. It's a unique song, but I wonder if it's more familiar than punks like to admit. What do you think?

It's been about eight or nine years since I have been in any treatment. My psychologist wanted me to sign myself into Horsham Clinic, which is pretty much a drug rehab. I wasn't on drugs, I just hated my life. His offices were at the clinic, so he took me to the unit I was supposed to enter. There were all these drug addict kids, and I was like, "what the fuck does this have to do with me?" If I had signed myself in, however, there were all these fucked up rules—I had to stay 72 hours, if I wanted to sign out, they had to observe me for 24 hours to see if I was fit to leave. I wanted no part of it. Ever since then, I have just kind of dealt with it. Sometimes its real bad. I get anxiety attacks and I can't sleep.

MRR: Let's talk about your song "Disarm." For those who don't know, it's about guns. A lot of punks and activists talk a great deal about guns, and the need for an armed dissent. You're in a punk band with a pretty strong anti-gun sentiment. I want to hear your side of that.

"Disarm" gets us in trouble sometimes, but the story is this: Five years ago this month, my best friend's little brother was shot to death in a robbery. He was 17 years old. A month later, almost to the day, my other close friend's dad was also shot to death in a robbery. Both of these people were pretty important in my life, both of their homes were places I used to stay when my parents would kick me out when I was a teenager. So, this hit me harder than anything I have ever experienced. It's hard for me to reconcile this with a bunch of white kids talking about revolution. As far as revolutionary acts are concerned, I see a lot more kids getting killed or maimed by stray bullets than I see anarchists out in the street killing cops. There is no impending revolution, so nothing anybody can tell me is going to make me see their side of this. The gun lobby and the companies that make guns target low income, high crime areas, and they flood them with low cost (mostly 9mm) handguns. That is the only revolution going on in America. Inner city kids are getting shot to pieces.

MRR: An anti-religious sentiment isn't unique in punk. Heck, Rambo makes a career out of it. One thing that I think is neat about your band (and Ted Leo... go figure) is that you offer a critique of religion from a Catholic perspective. I think in a lot of ways that Joycean guilt still hits us punks.

I was raised Catholic, but I have recovered. My parents are devout (we're Irish... go figure, again). Growing up, I was basically taught to feel guilty about everything. When I started telling my parents I didn't believe in God, I had to present my argument—they weren't going to just give up. So, I read all this shit about Christianity. I look at that history, and I can't believe that anybody would read the bible and think that it hasn't been molded and shaped to fit the needs of the various governments over the centuries. It's just a tool used to keep people scared and in line. I know people who believe in a god, they have their own beliefs, and it makes them happy, and that's fine—I wish I had such hope in the world. But when you send missionaries around the world trying to make Muslims be Christians, that's bullshit.

MRR: Do you think punk is a sustainable lifestyle? It seems to have a pretty regular dropout rate, but then again, that doesn't mean it has to be that way.

I think everybody has to sort of define their own boundaries as far as a punk lifestyle. It all goes back to the homogenization I was talking about earlier. I have friends who are punk as fuck, but who dress like they're in Weezer. I don't think my band is really a traditional punk band, but the way I run my band and the way I try to live my life is punk, and in a DIY spirit. I guess more important than punk is self empowerment, thinking for yourself, acting on your own.

The Sound of Failure, 510 Burgundy Drive, Southampton, PA 18966
www.angelfire.com/sd/failure

ExTxA

Interview by Jess Threat

EPILEPTIC TERROR ATTACK
UMEÅ HARDCORE

ETA (Epileptic Terror Attack) is an 80s style skate thrash band hailing from Umeå, Sweden. Echoing US style hardcore, they keep their style very pure and simple. They've been attacking the Euro scene for a while now and are finally making it to the USA for a tour in June 2002. They have tons of releases already out there and a new 7" coming out soon. So go check them out on this tour and don't forget.. "Skate fast, die young."

MRR: So here's the obvious crap. Tell us your names, what you do in the band, and what other bands you're in.
Marcus: 23 years old; guitar; Tristess (Swedish hardcore) and The Go-Gorillas (surf-rock).
Otto: 21 years old; vocals; Tristess (Swedish hardcore).
Jens: 29 years old; drums; The Vectors (punk rock).
Christoffer: 24 years old; bass; DS-13 (mad hardcorethrashers).
MRR: Could you run down the list of records you have out? I think I have them all but I don't want to be overconfident and make myself look like an ass because of it.
The Racket 7" (Putrid Filth Conspiracy/High Society)
We're Not the Problem LP (Putrid Filth Conspiracy)
No Faith 12"/CD (Deranged Records)
split LP w/ Tear It Up (Dead Alive Records)
We're Not the Problem & The Racket & some more CD (PFC and 625 Productions)
Out soon:
We Are the Attack 7" (Deranged Records)
MRR: Where did the name Epileptic Terror Attack come from? I know you are thinking of changing it. Any ideas of what you would change it to? Are you changing it because of the whole "terrorism" crap? Or because you think the name sucks?
Marcus: When me and the other guys started the band a couple of years ago it wasn't too serious and we just came up with a stupid name. It has no special meaning or anything like that. When we got more serious we just kept the name, we didn't think much about it. But a couple of months ago we were really trying to come up with a new name because we think it's really silly, but we couldn't come up with a good one so we are keeping our rotten name. I kind of like the acronym ETA, but the thing is that a violent separatist group in the north of Spain has the same name. I've heard that you can get arrested if you wear our T-shirts in Spain and that kind of sucks. We would probably get in some serious trouble if we toured Spain. The whole terrorism shit isn't something new, but for some time now it's been a hot topic. But what the fuck, we're just a hardcore-band…
MRR: So how many lineup changes have you guys been through exactly? Is Marcus the only original member?
Marcus: I am the only original member, but I used to play bass and sing. Me and Mattias, the original guitarist, started the band and our first drummer was just a friend who wasn't into our music. He quit after a couple of months and we got Jens to fill in. You can almost count Jens as an original member; he's playing drums on all our releases. On the *Racket* 7" the lineup was: Mattias: guitar and vocals; Marcus: bass and vocals; Jens: drums. After that recording we decided to get a singer, and Otto ended up singing in ETA. That lineup recorded *We're Not the Problem,* but after that Mattias decided to move from Umeå and quit the band. Christoffer joined the following autumn and I switched to playing guitar and we kept the same lineup

for about one and a half years now. I think it's by far the best one. To sum things up, we've totally had four lineups, but only three on the records.

MRR: You guys seem to do a limited press of almost every record you put out. Why do you do that? Is it your idea, or is it the labels' doing?

Marcus: Yes, there are limited presses of all our releases except the first 7". It's cool, with some limited colored vinyl, but it's mostly the labels' idea. There are three different covers to the *No Faith* 12", one original cover press and two test-press covers. The test-presses are so limited that they are almost impossible to find—only 12 copies were pressed of one and only 60 of another. It's more just a fun thing for the label and us, but it's too limited. That is maybe a little bit unnecessary—I don't think our new releases will have as many different covers and stuff, but you never know.

Otto: We're really trying to keep the limited presses as few as possible...

MRR: While we're on the subject of limited presses, are you guys record collectors?

Marcus: We all buy lots of records and stuff, but I don't see myself or the other guys as record collectors. Christoffer is closest to be labeled as one, but he's not a fanatic. He won't pay hundreds of US dollars for rare stuff, but his record collection is kind of big and filled with some rare stuff.

Jens: I like to buy records, but I don't really care if it's the original press or a repress. I find the music most important. But I prefer vinyl before CDs.

Otto: I like to buy records—it's really kind of a nerd thing, but I like records and presses and shit like that. Christoffer is way ahead though...

MRR: You have a lot of songs about skateboarding. Do you all skate? Are any of you professionals?

Otto: Everyone except Christoffer skates. Both me, Jens, and Marcus have been skating for 10 years or more. We can skate, but it's not on a professional level. We skate for fun!

Jens: I've been skating since 1988 and was sponsored for a while back then. A funny skate memory was when I was participating in a skateboard contest back in 1991 and got disqualified for drinking beer when I skated. The next day the local newspapers wrote about "The Beer Skater" who ruined the contest. Maybe that speaks for how I feel about skateboarding—the most important thing is that it's fun.

Marcus: Skateboarding is great. I think that I should be sponsored, no one skates more stinky than I do. It always look like I'm drunk when I skate, but I don't even drink...The best places to skate in Umeå during the summers are Apberget, Tegs-banken och Carlshems-plattan. Jånte D-kay, from DS-13, usually organizes a Skate Fest once a year at the indoor skatepark with some local punk and hardcore bands and skating. Jonas is a great skater, by the way.

MRR: What's the deal with the "Fucked in USA tour"? Why that name? What are the dates? Are you excited about your first US tour? Any specific places you're excited to see?

Marcus: That name is just a joke, I don't think our tour is going to be called anything special, just "ETA US TOUR 2002" or something like that. The "fucked in..." thing comes from an Anti-Cimex live 7" called "Fucked In Finland." I'm looking forward to seeing California if we go there and the legendary punk venues like CBGB's.

Jens: All dates are not booked yet, but the first dates will be in Chicago, probably the 6th of June. We will tour for about a month, mostly on the east coast. You can check out our website at www.epilepticterrorattack.com or www.underestimatedrecords.com for more information. I'm really excited about the tour. I think that people in the US will like ETA—it will be a blast! I'm looking forward to seeing all the classic skate spots and skateparks I've seen in skate films and magazines. I hope to see some rednecks too.

Otto: Of course it feels great to tour the USA. I'm really looking forward to see famous places and buildings like the pyramids and the Eiffel Tower. I hope that we have some

time to skate, go to record stores and stuff like that. I really hope that you have good french fries, or "pommes," as I say, over there, otherwise I will starve to death.

MRR: How did you manage to set up this tour?

Jens: Anton from Underestimated Records is setting up the tour. Christoffer is keeping most of the contact with him via email. I don't know where it's good or bad to play so it's great to have someone over there helping us setting the whole thing up.

MRR: What's it like living in the north of Sweden? It gets really dark during the winters, right? Some of your songs seem to be about depression—is it fueled by the darkness?

Marcus: I've lived here in Umeå my whole life and I like it. It's a pretty small town but I don't want to live in a big fucking town. The winters are long, dark, and cold, but I'm used to it. I think that it's better to have a lot snow and stuff than just rain and slush like in the south of Sweden. One thing that sucks it that there are no good record-stores here.

Jens: It sucks living here during the winters—we have snow from November to April and I don't snowboard or anything like that. It's not possible to skate outdoors during the winter, and indoor skating is not really the same thing.

Otto: I originally come the south of Sweden, Linköping to be exact. I moved here three years ago. For me it's really dark in the winters; it seems like I never get used to it. I had a really hard time last year when everything went black. I'm better now though. It's hard to point out one single reason, but I think the weather really helps me get fucked up in the head.

MRR: When you first started putting out records the songs were more in Swedish then in English, like on the *Racket* 7". Then you went to more songs in English than in Swedish, and now your newest releases are all in English. Why are you leaning more towards English now? Do you write some songs in Swedish because you feel the lyrics mean more in your own language? And if you do, why are those songs so important to you?

Marcus: I don't really know, it just turned out that way I suppose. I don't think that Swedish lyrics fit our music… It might be easier to express myself in Swedish, but at the same time it easily sounds silly. It's tricky to sing about skateboarding in Swedish—only Magnum Bonum have done that and gotten away with it.

Jens: When we first started we sounded more like traditional Swedish hardcore, and it felt natural to sing in Swedish. I don't think that the meaning of the lyrics have anything to do with the language. I think that our music is more important than our lyrics anyway. One thing is that Otto sounds so fucking "käng" when he's singing in Swedish and we don't want to sound like that.

Otto: I really *do* sound käng when I sing in Swedish. I write perhaps half of the lyrics we use and we decided to only write in English since we're playing totally American music—and I'm no fan of crossover in any way.

MRR: What is the song "Pax Americana" all about? Is it an anti-America song? Just wondering, because I was under the impression that Sweden is pretty americanized, so I thought maybe it was a res[illegible] hat.

Otto: It's [illegible] guitarist Mattias who wrote that song, I guess it's about USA being jerks and always having to be a part of everything that happens all over the world.

Marcus: And I also think that it's about the USA's role as the only real superpower in the world today and how they abuse their position to gain more power. The US government claims to help the world stop global terrorism and other stuff like that, but they only do it when they have their own interests to look after.

MRR: If you could have been in any band throughout history, what band would it have been and who would you be in that band?

Jens: That's an easy question. I would have been Clive Burr and played drums in Iron Maiden on their first three records. Then it would be me drumming on the three best records of all time! And I bet there was some serious partying going on back then. Cheers mate!

Otto: I think that I would like to be the four-eyed geek in Negative Approach!

Marcus: I think that it would have been great to play in a band like Black Flag, Youth of Today, or Raw Power. They were hardcore/punk-pioneers—I think they were the first bands that went on international tours. That must have been exciting, but probably tuff. Just read *Get in the Van*.

MRR: On the newer records you seem to shy away from talking about skateboarding as you did early on, and instead you talk about more serious stuff, such as personal problems and some political stuff. But from my translation (which definitely isn't perfect) isn't the song "Fortsätt att skrika" all about how you don't write about politics?

Otto: That's not really how it is. On *No Faith* we have two songs about skateboarding and songs about other stuff as well. On the brand new material we sing both about skateboarding and other stuff, like that work sucks, that life is boring, and that there is nothing to do in this town. I believe that we've been singing about similar issues all the time. Maybe it's even more songs about skateboarding now than ever before—it's an important subject, you know.

Marcus: On the *Racket* 7" we had more political lyrics, mostly due to Mattias's interest in political issues. I don't know much about political issues, and I rather write lyrics about stuff that I know, like skateboarding for example. I think that you misunderstood the lyrics to "Fortsätt att skrika" ("Keep on Screaming") a little bit. It's about how our lyrics are not so much about politics; they are more about what we think is right and wrong. We're still screaming about the same stuff that punk and hardcore bands have been screaming for over 20 years because nothing has happened yet. Politicians are still ignorant and upper class, the boss is still a jerk, war still sucks, and so on. We, and other bands, must keep in screaming and screaming until something happens. Ahhhhhhhh!!!!! Maybe it's not the most creative thing to do to change stuff, but at least it's something.

MRR: So last question...do you know Anti-Cimex? You claim not to in your lyric sheet for the "Heroindöd igen" cover, but we Americans are under the impression that Sweden is too small for you not to know them! While I'm poking fun at the Swedish scene, why don't you us a little bit about it, so that we will no longer be ignorant about it.

Jens: You ignorant bastards! One thing first—"Heroindöd igen" is not a cover, we just stole the lyrics from the Anti-Cimex song "Heroindöd" because they are great and we had no lyrics for our song. *(I was wondering why that song sounded so funny! J)*

Otto: Before I moved to Umeå I lived in the same town as Jonsson, the guy who used to sing in Anti-Cimex (and Wolfpack after that), and I've actually been to the same wedding party as him. Also he used to come to some shows and drinking parties and stuff like that. I think the Swedish hardcore scene is surviving, it's far from great but there's still a lot of activity. Worth checking out: Intensity, Dead End, Second Thought, Sayyadina, Asterisk*, Burning Kitchen, Cult of Luna, Victims...

Marcus: Sweden isn't just a little country with polar bears and reindeers everywhere—there are over eight million people living here. There are some great Swedish punk and hardcore bands around today, like DS-13, Bruce Banner, The Dead Ones, and The Vectors. The scene is not as big as a couple of years ago, it's definitely more DIY. One thing I've noticed is that there are many bands everywhere, but most of them are not serious. Still, it's great that kids still start hardcore and punk bands, and go to shows and stuff like that. I don't think that a lot of people are willing to spend as much time as it takes to get a band going. I don't mean that we spend all our time on ETA, but at least it's a big part of our lives.

MRR: Closing comments!

Jens: Keep on trucking and see you bastards on tour.

Marcus: Skate fast. Play fast. Eat fast!

Otto: Keep on rocking in a free world. Check out new 7" on Deranged Records!

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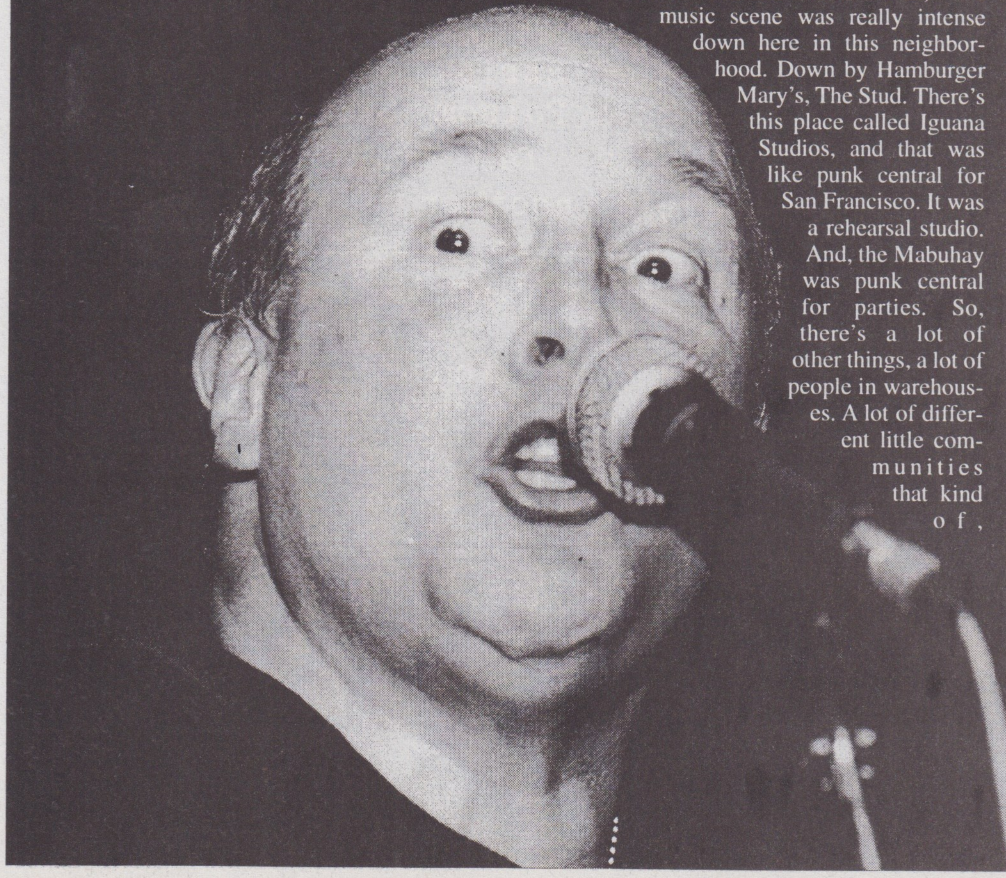
THE NUBS

Interview by Hector Jaime

Photos by Dan Hoffman

The Nubs are a San Francisco punk band that have been around in various incarnations since the mid-to-late-70s. Their only single was released on Businessman Records in 1980 and features the songs "Job" and "Little Billy's Burning". The former tune later appeared on the Killed By Death #5 compilation and was also covered by the New Bomb Turks on a single they did for Fat Wreck Chords in 1996. Recently, the Nubs played a few shows in San Francisco after a long absence. Their current line-up features Jim Stockford (guitar/vocals), Dave Muniz (bass/vocals) and Geno Lucero (drums). I was lucky enough to catch the trio at the Covered Wagon this past June, and they immediately became my favorite San Francisco band. My admiration for the band gushed out in the semi-regular column I write for blankgeneration.com, which included parts of the interview I conducted with Jim while eating sandwiches at Buzz 9. Now, here's the rest of the interview where you get to hear Jim talk about the band instead of me. I hope you have as much fun with it as I did.



MRR: Can you tell me a brief history of the band—when it started, who was in the band. . .

Jim: The genesis of the band was called the Violators, and the Violators never performed. I think they weren't very good. And it was Dave and Daryl and a few other people depending, including a guy named Vince. Things happened and Vince disappeared, so they asked me to play guitar and that's how I joined them. And, they gave up the name, Violators, and they got named the Nubs by this guy. So this guy names us the Nubs and so, OK we're the Nubs, I guess. So, that was the birth of the Nubs. It was kind of built around in the mid-70s. There was this kid, maybe he was 16, and we all lived in a warehouse. The kid was really out there, really, really smart, really, really wacko, and so, he wrote some really kinda out there lyrics and Dave put together chords to it, and I kinda dressed up the parts a little bit. And that was kinda what it was. The fact of this kid, that was really kinda like our focus, his name was Daryl. But, Daryl was so wacko that he spun out of orbit, and he ended up somewhere up in the North. I guess he had some unfortunate goings-on in his community 'cause he ended up shotgunning somebody and going to jail.

MRR: Was this in San Francisco?

Jim: Oh yeah, it was maybe three blocks away from here (South of Market, 9th and Howard area). The music scene was really intense down here in this neighborhood. Down by Hamburger Mary's, The Stud. There's this place called Iguana Studios, and that was like punk central for San Francisco. It was a rehearsal studio. And, the Mabuhay was punk central for parties. So, there's a lot of other things, a lot of people in warehouses. A lot of different little communities that kind of, more or less bumped into each other, you know how that is. The biggest bands were the Avengers, the Dead Kennedys, the Mutants—that was one of my favorite San Francisco bands, The Mutants. I always thought they were the best. X was just getting started from LA. DOA was coming down from Canada. And, we were doing sound for some of these groups and playing small venues. We played the Mabuhay a couple of times. We played different places that no longer exist. That was the best, (emphatically), oh, God, that was the absolute best. It was so great.

MRR: Are there any crazy stories from the warehouse parties, or just weird happenings.

Jim: (pause) No, not really. Parties are parties. A ton of people come, you know. They always started around 10 to 10:30 and everyone drifted off around 2:00-2:30, you know. What can you say? But, it was way musician parties. Like, real, live musicians. So, there's this interchange of stuff going on. That's what the parties were: musicians and artists. God, I think at one party, we had six bands.

MRR: Do you remember who played?

Jim: Oh, no, I can't remember. That was so many ounces ago. So, that was kinda what it was like here. We were in different bands, you know, we were in like three bands in once, like a lot of musicians. Most musicians are in three or four bands. But, this was the genuine band. I started this thing with a guy named, Peter, called "Valencia Tool and Dye." That was kinda like a we do anything for money club. So he had art, we had a rehearsal studio we were renting. We had movies. That was the best thing. We had lines around the club, which was a little bit scary for an underground joint. Then we were in the (San Francisco) *Chronicle*, which was good and bad. And, we had some pretty big concerts, and we got in tight with some guy named Ed, Edwin. Edwin had money and financed our recording of this record, this 45. So, if the theme of our discussion is "slow," this 45 is the jewel. This song that Dave wrote is called "Job."

MRR: Right.

Jim: You know about it?

MRR: Yeah, the New Bomb Turks do it a cover of it.

Jim: Yeah, that's right. I just got an email today from somebody, you know, "where the fuck are you? We wanna do your album. Can you sell me more copies of this 45?" That's a Persian living in Italy, I think. Then we got this Italian record rep guy, Rave-Up, who is interested in putting out these recordings that

we put together over that period time. A guy in Germany, we even got people in Los Angeles, back East, I can't remember where, somebody in Australia, some guy in Japan. We printed, I don't know, 500 records. We're the laziest fucks in the world. We're totally lazy. We got a few out to the record stores; never went back and got our money, you know. Didn't give a shit. But (Job) was a really giant song, it's a really strong song. It's gotten copied, it's been on several compilations. It's an anthem. "Hey mom, I just quit my job. Fuck your job!" It's so perfect. There's a lot of songs where there's a lot of contribution. That was totally Dave's.

MRR: What did he do in the band?

Jim: Me and Dave both were bass players. That's how we kinda got together. If two bass players live in the same warehouse, you get to know each other. And, if you like each other, you're going to be really tight. Dave was already playing bass, so they needed a guitar player. So, that's why I turned to guitar. But, I always sneered at guitar players. I never liked them. I thought they were a bunch of shitheads.

MRR: Why?

Jim: If you take a look at anybody with a musical instrument, like a bassoon, or a drum, or a violin, any musical instrument, the chances are they're a student. But, if they keep it with them, they know a little bit about music. They like music. Except a guitar player. If you see someone with a guitar, the chances are *not* that they're a student, the chances are *not* that they like music. The chances are that they sniff coke and they wanna get laid. And they wanna wear tight t-shirts and be, like, groovy. It's like earrings or something. Something happened. Some terrible thing happened that the instrument of the guitar has been associated as a sex—like a big dick or a red sports car. So, "hey, I play guitar," is the way to get laid. So, all these morons are playing guitar. It ruins it. Like, where'd Barney Kussel go? So, here we are. We need somebody to play guitar. And, anybody can play guitar, so, why don't you play guitar, Jim? I'm like, well any moron can play guitar, so, I guess I will. I mean, after all, it's punk right. How hard can it be? Way hard. The Ramones. When you listen to the Ramones' guitar work, when you listen to the production of that band, *that* blows away most of the shit that was being done in terms of smoothness. It comes off as really rough, but, actually, the technique is very good. They call it three-chord rock; fuckin', it's a thousand chords in those things. It's fairly complex stuff, compared to Led Zeppelin, which was kinda like the big muscle band at the time. But, still, how hard can it be. So, here we are. . .

MRR: Who's singing on that single?

Jim: I sing "Job," and Dave sings "Little Billy."

MRR: Has that been on any comps?

Jim: Little Billy? No, I think just "Job."

MRR: Did Dave write the lyrics to that?

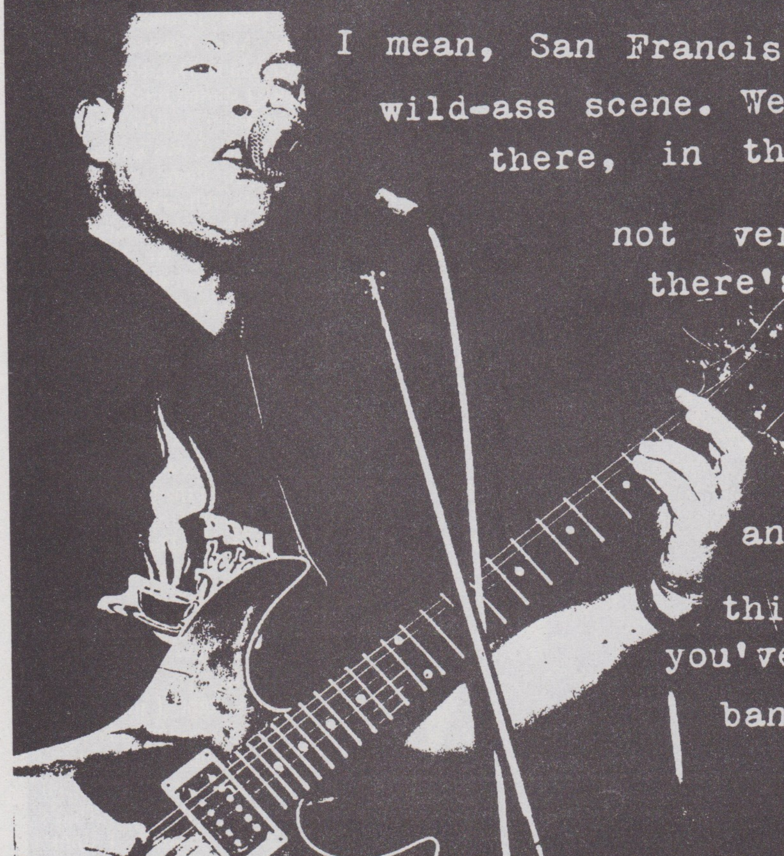
Jim: No, Daryl wrote the lyrics to little Billy. Job is a 100% Dave. Little Billy is Daryl's lyrics, Dave's score. And us just thrashing, according to how Dave says we should play the chords.

MRR: The lyrics to "Job," were they heartfelt or tongue-in-cheek?

Jim: Both. I mean how can you say, "Hey, mom, I just quit my job" and not really mean it, and also be tongue-in-cheek? But, that's what makes it so perfect. Most people, when they quit their jobs, they're bitter, they take it seriously, you know. "Yeah, I'm a victim," or "Those Bastards," you know, something like that. But, "fuck your job!" you can be happy and say that. And it's in this punk spirit. It's something eternally fresh.

MRR: When you guys started the band, were you already listening to punk bands, you know, from New York, or. . .

Jim: Yeah, well, we were listening to the punk bands in San Francisco. I mean, San Francisco had a big-ass, a wild-ass . . . Then we look how little the city is. We were living right down there, in the strip, going along Folsom Street. There's not very far you go, before there's another warehouse and more musicians. Going down to the Mission. That's really kind of what it was, going down to the Mission and going down to Folsom St. That's where it was at, this tiny little area. And, if you've got a bunch of different bands, all punking it out, you know each other. Our parties, we had several bands at any one party, so it was real tight. And, then, like the bands coming in. . . We were in the low-budget thing. I never saw the Ramones, I never saw any big bands, *never*. I never had any money. So, I always saw little bands,



I mean, San Francisco had a big-ass, a wild-ass scene. We were living right down there, in the strip, going along Folsom Street. There's not very far you go, before there's another warehouse and more musicians. Going down to the Mission. That's really kind of what it was, going down to the Mission and going down to Folsom St. That's where it was at, this tiny little area. And, you've got a bunch of different bands, all punking it out...

especially if I was doing sound, or helping out at the place, or if I was in one of the bands. So, that's how I got to see bands. It was always this low budget stuff. That's how I got to see X. We were into our scene, the San Francisco thing, Just kinda by default, just because that was our basketball court. We're gonna play basketball, I guess we're gonna have to play here, 'cause here's where we are.

MRR: The single was released in 1980. Was it recorded before?

Jim: I don't know. What's the difference at this point? It was written in 77, 76, I don't know. Maybe 75, I don't think so. It was recorded around '79, 80, you know, it takes forever. It's like, "hey, man, let's do a record." Then, four months later, "hey, let's do a record, yeah that would be cool." And then you gotta go get it mastered. Then you gotta go get the packaging. Then you gotta go dragging around to the record stores. It takes years. Like our album.

MRR: Are you still in the process of finishing that?

Jim: Well, see if it took us two years to do the 45, and we've got sixteen songs on the album, it makes sense that it would take us like, sixteen years to get the album together, doesn't it?

MRR: Have you been performing live this whole time, I mean sporadically?

Jim: Way sporadically. We're really lazy. We do it for fun. I'd say, something's happened to us in the past few years, and I think that this is a really interesting angle. Nobody really ever heard of us. We were way low under anybody's radar. It was like, "those guys in that room." We put out a record just because we ran into this guy with money and we were able to work that out.

MRR: You mentioned the San Francisco scene in this neighborhood, when did that start fizzling out? Was it noticeable, or. . .

Jim: You know how when things get more and more successful, they get more and more puffed up? That was what was happening here. You start to see art galleries, and, it's not an artist who's got a warehouse somewhere with the dirty laundry in one pile and the clean one in another pile. It's an "art gallery." It's like, clean and neat. People who do that are fucked up. They're doing what, I guess, what marketing and advertising people do, they try to manipulate people. There's no art there. There's nothing that they're saying, there's nothing that they're saying that has got any value. They're trying to make some money. They're vampires. It's not right. But, you see it, whenever something gets going. The rest of the population buys onto it because they're just bored to tears. They're fucking bored stiff. So, they say, "hey there's something exciting happening. Let's go join it." Well, they've got nothing to offer except cleanness and neatness and charging money, and pretty soon it's dead. And, that's what happened here. I'd say, you can start seeing it in the 80s.

And another thing that was happening around here that was going on with it was the queer scene. It was fantastic. It was the most riotous, beautiful—I mean, parties like you wouldn't believe. Excess to the excess. It was wonderful. That was, I think an important part of it. You have these musicians and artists hanging together. You've got this sea of queers. It was an ocean of cum.

MRR: Was anything going on in the East Bay during that time?

Jim: Not that I know of. Now, I hear it. That's something else when you talk about the decline of this neighborhood, that whole thing. You're starting to see something. It's just getting too shi shi, you now. You're starting to see it in this neighborhood, the beginning of the end in this shiny cleanness. Sometime in the probably late Eighties, early Nineties, 1990, give and take a few years, you start hearing about Oakland. It's not like Oakland didn't exist, not like there weren't artists there, you start *hearing* about it in San Francisco, partly because there's nothing worth listening to in San Francisco anymore. But, also because people are moving over there, because people are discovering, and—a lot of punk scene, there's a lot of club activity over there. I never heard about it, so I don't know. I mean, there was so much going on over hear in the 70s, early 80s, *so much,* that we couldn't handle it all, let alone go to Oakland.

MRR: Did you guys ever dress like punks, as far as the whole ripped shirts and spikey haircuts and shit?

Jim: I feel myself that we were even more authentic because we had our own ripped clothes, but it wasn't ripped for any particular reason, and it didn't look like punk clothes. It just looked like some bum with ripped clothes. Dave gets pretty high-styling, but I've always been so completely out of it that I don't really—I mean, if I get dressed up, I get dressed up in what mom told me to get dressed up in. I'm just not aware. Dave can make himself slick. Dave can go to fancy parties and look really happening. Not me.

MRR: Are you guys aware at all of some bands, maybe more of the popular ones from that era that are getting back together again?

Jim: Oh, yeah, we've heard that stuff. It doesn't matter to me because nobody is sending me a check. So, if Jennifer Nun is going to sing some more or Debbie Harry is going to have a career, I mean, (shrugs) okay. Actually, if X got back together, I'd care, because I really liked X. I really liked Exene. Her harmonies and stuff, that's some shit. And DOA is still around, they're still fucking doing it.. . .I don't pay any attention, except that I notice that now there's this new interest in punk. It's like it never happened. You got retrospectives on TV.

MRR: Did you see any of those?

Jim: Yeah, I saw some, just by accident. Not like I look for the stuff. 'Cause, I have to be there and have to click the remote. If I click something to stop on, you know, like most people. That's how I saw it. I learned a fair amount. A lot of stuff I didn't know.

MRR: Is it safe to say, because, a lot of those retrospectives on punk claim that a certain city, like New York, was where it started, is it safe to say that around the same time, it was going on in different—like everyone had the same ideas in different parts of the world?

Jim: I think I only saw a couple of those TV shows, I only remember one. I thought they were really good, really good. One of the things they said that strikes me as really true is that punk never really got co-opted. When record companies finally delivered something punkish, they didn't call it "punk." And they cleaned it up some. There wasn't any "fuck you" in it. It wouldn't sell to the Bible Belt. You couldn't play it across the national radio scene without someone getting freaked out and the advertisers pulling budgets and shit like that. So, punk was a name that was never used, and therefore a name that could be used by people that weren't in that, people that were free. And free is where meaning is. You got to be free in order have meaning. If you start being tight-assed, you get to be like these art galleries. Or like the commercial music. When something tightens up, all of a sudden, "Oh, gee, another McDonald's burger." So, the Ramones seemed to have kicked it off. Everyone seems to agree 'cause they were so just completely different. They were so 1950s motorcycle, that's what it was. Except, you couldn't possibly take it seriously with this guy with long hair and these guys that were so non-motorcycle, no threat at all. They were doofs, not even. And punk really made sense. Then there was the English thing, that was recognized as it's own thing. There was the New York thing, that was recognized as it's own thing. That was different. And, for me, there was the San Francisco thing, and that's all I knew about until X showed up. Then, hey, there's some people in Los Angeles, really? It seemed like every city had it's own group of bands that kind of knew each other and did their own thing, and weren't so much going for the record con-

tracts. It's like local basketball teams, they were playing each other. 'Cause it's pretty competitive, I think. And, they're comparing to each other. But, it was to each other in the same city. Nobody compared the Mutants to the Clash. That never happened. So, I think because people were bored and some of 'em saw the freedom, saw the light, and followed the light in their own town. I think that's what happened. So, if you wanna credit someone, you can credit the Ramones. The rest of it is just people being inspired. What do you think?

MRR: (hear I wanna say I think the Electric Eels were the first, but what do I know, so. .) What is that song you guys did at the Covered Wagon, I think it's called "Soap May Float," what is that song about.

Jim: That's one of our earlier songs, that's pre-80s. I think that's partly Daryl and partly Dave. A lot of songs are partly Daryl and partly somebody else. 'Cause Daryl was probably worse than the rest of it. But he'd get these ideas, and we'd go, "that's cool," and we'd add to it. That would be it. Daryl loved to laugh at people who were idiots. One of the things he was doing was, "you can fly!" to people who where cranked out on dope, Way out on dope, like LSD or something, who think they can fly. "You can fly." He'd encourage them. "Please, jump off the building, you can fly." This was kind of like in that spirit where, I guess he read it in the paper, I don't know. Some, poor, stupid, idiot mother was in the paper, I think, because her baby drowned. And, there she was. Because, if you're baby drowned, it's real possible that the police can come around and do things to you, and then the DA gets into. it. All of a sudden, you're in court, and the papers are getting it. You're baby drowned because you were looking for a fix, this is probably something the papers jump on if they've got nothing else to talk about. If Nixon hasn't fucked up. So, I think that's what it was, some newspaper story about some poor lady who happened to have the bad luck that the DA got on her for letting her baby drown where he hadn't heard about other babies drowning. She goes out and gets some dope, and the baby drowns in the bath tub. "Soap may float, but you're baby won't."

MRR: Do you write any lyrics?

Jim: Yeah, there's some songs that are half Daryl, half me.

MRR: Like, what songs?

Jim: "Morgue Watch." I think that song is completely mine. I think the only part of that that's Daryl's is the words "morgue watch." Dave will brow beat me into writing some words. Something that's more recent, that's a real joint thing, we had a drummer named Lou. I was making fun of Dave's chords. Dave does some things that are pretty embarrassing. But, everybody loves them, so I'm clearly the odd man out. But, still, I was there making fun. Then Lou comes around, and makes fun of me. And, so, we put these two little pieces of chords together, and we got a song. Now Dave wants to have a song. I'm going, "fuck, this is what we've been making fun of you for. You wanna make a song out of this ridiculously stupid shit." And then, he did. So, we came up with this thing, what the fuck is it called? It's got a slow part and a fast part. Something about time. (pause) "Waiting for the end of the Day!" That's what it's called. We've got this song, "waiting for the end of the day, 'cause I hate my job." Then, "yeah, let's fucking go, let's have a party!" So, the fast part's mine and the slow part's Dave's, for the lyrics. For the music, half of it is mine, half of it's Lou's. So, that's pretty characteristic.

MRR: Do you think that bands who don't do the have-a-shitty-job-thing, and actually make it in music, do you think that that delegitimatizes the punk spirit?

Jim: I think that if a human being can figure out how to live without having a job, and likes to play, then what's left? Why are they playing music? That just comes out of who they are. I can't see how you'd say anything about, well "this guy's got a job, and therefore, they're fucked, or they're more legitimate or less legitimate." How can you possibly say something unless you listen to what it is that they're doing? And, even then, they got a job, but, they hate their job, and it forces them to work, or they don't got a job, and they're lazy, and they're lazy, and they don't do anything. Or they don't have a job, and they have the time to really jump out. Or, they do have a job, and they're drunk. It all depends on who it is, and how expensive the rents are. I think that fucking rent thing, man, is madness. It really hurts everybody. You don't get to listen to other people's music, because they've got a job, and they're tired . . . Back in the 70s, I can't remember which of the Mutants girls worked in a sandwich shop. I was doing punk stuff, making my rent by playing country/western bars, and painting houses. So, you run out, get some dollars, then play music, or not. You can't do that in San Francisco now. There's not even places where you can live. Finding a good place to live where you can make noise is a problem. Twenty years ago, it wasn't that way.

MRR: Do you listen to any younger punk bands?

Jim: Well, I find it impossible to listen to anything. The best thing I can do is listen to college radio stations if I can get the reception. And, I don't listen to anything on the internet, because, the internet is so big, you can't find anything. It's like, "here's everything," and, you're going, "fuck that!" And, I really don't like to go anywhere; I just like to stay in my room. So, I don't here much. But, yeah, the band that played after us . . .

MRR: The Fleshies.

Jim: Yeah, the Fleshies. I liked them a lot. I like the young bands when I see them. I don't really pay too much attention to what their names are. If they're doing something, like New Bomb Turks, for example, they're definitely newer than us. I really liked them, too. I saw their show. I really liked their show; the energy they bring out. Kids get to do that. Old people sometimes do. I remember some guy, he was in high school, down in the South. Some cajun band was hired for their high school dance. I think this was in the 60s. They were really disappointed; they hired these fucking old Cajun guys. We want rock n roll, we want the Beatles, or something like that. Well, the Cajun guys showed up, and they blew the shit off the high school gymnasium. The reason that I know about it is 'cause the guy was still so impressed, when I talked to him years later, that he mentioned this. That these old fucks that could barely ...(makes a jittery old man with a cane gesture and noise], but when they got there, POW! So, you can't even say. Like, that Bottom of the Hill concert, I saw a lot of young bands there; most of them sucked. I'm sorry. They were so pretentious, or they were really into some kind of slow groove, or just didn't have it together, didn't have much to offer. These people need to be weeded out. I thought the Fleshies was an example of a good band, exactly what was happening (in the 70s]. They're right here. They're real. They're not Green Day. Here's this kid, you know, pulling off his pants, swinging his dick around, singing and thrashing and breaking bottles, you know, picking glass out of his foot. That's who the Fleshies is. They could live next door to me. It's got that feel. I think, that's what I like. That's the only time I'm aware. I still don't go to big concerts. I mean, it's kinda already done.

MRR: Do you think that rock music is still more for young people? 'Cause, I remember when I first heard punk music, everything seemed so new to me. And now, it's starting to wear out a bit. I can't say anything is original anymore.

Jim: The thing is, popular music—like this shit (they were playing jazz at the restaurant) that we're listening to right now, it's like jazz, but it's not really complex. It's got a feel to it that makes it jazz and not punk, or something else. But, if you listen to it—you can hear a punk band doing this. (jerks and spazzes out to the music, while scatting loudly, as if a punk band was playing jazz, a la Saccharine Trust, or Electric Eels or Minutemen). You can see a punk band doing this. So, the core of the music is really, really simple. A lot of 4/4 time; a lot of 1-4-5, you know, not getting too far away from things, then putting colors in, and the rest of it's the attitude, the process, and the ambiance of it. So, when people come up with new lyrics and showcase them right, that's new. Because, it has to do with our world now. Or, if they have taken off of something, but they find some new way to play the same old note, hey it's new, because they've got a new device to play it through, or they play it in a certain way against a certain lyric, or there's a certain attitude. So, there will always be this shifting around. It scares me that what we have to work with is so small. We're gonna all finally get bored. But, somebody said that about classical music a hundred years ago: "all the music that's possible to write has been written." And that's before Gershwin. You can't say Gershwin wasn't a huge contribution, and Bartok and Stravinski, and all those other ones. So, there's a way that you can have faith. You just gotta have faith, because, it's sooo boring.

Interview with Les Baton Rouge (Suspiria, James, Peter, and Corrine). By Dave Beckerman

MRR: When and how did you start?
The band started in 1998, when our previous bands (Everground and Kiute Loss) ended. At the time we wanted to start a new band with a different kind of sound.

MRR: You remind me a mix between Nina Hagen and the Sex Pistols, I've never thought it would be possible to mix them, but it sounds really great. How do you describe your music? Tell us your influences and faves bands.
We're a punk rock band with influences of 80s new wave and riot grrrls Movement. We love Sex Pistols, Siouxsie and the Banshees, Nina Hagen, Raincoats, Devo, Sonny Vincent, Slits, Clash, Kraftwerk, Au Pairs, Fugazi, David Bowie, Nirvana, Dead Kennedys, New York Dolls, Bikini Kill, Babes in Toyland, and so on.

MRR: What can we find in your lyrics?
We're not a band who writes about naughty ladies or fast cars, but about activism and things who really concern us: provocation, action, and love.

MRR: Suspiria, you were the founder of the first female punk rock band in Portugal, right?
Yeah, I started the band "Everground" in 1994 at 15 years old. People around here weren't used to see women on stage. It was very funny to me to provoke the audience-I still do it today! For the first time in Portugal there were a group of girls who wanted to change something!

MRR: All your CDs were released by The Jeanette Plat Corporation. What is it?
Jeanette Plat is a female association founded by Les Baton Rouge with the purpose of stimulating women to have an active role in the artistic environment, which for the most part is occupied by men. At the moment, we work with Elevator Music (USA), Slingshot Productions (Portugal), Munster Records (Spain), Babes in Boyland (France), Kultur Fabrik - Krefeld (Germany), and Girl Soldier (USA).

MRR: How was the contact with Elevator Music Records? Do you like the sound of the album?
We met Fernando from Elevator Music through the Tedio Boys, a Portuguese punk band. Yeah, we like the album's sound. We think that for the first time we could put Les Baton Rouge sound and attitude on a record.

MRR: How was your European tour?
The tour is going great! We knew a lot of people and played with excellent bands, but one of the things that most surprised us is the fact that people from different musical tastes (reggae, rap, metal, gothic, rockabilly) come talk to us at the end of the gigs and say "I loved your show!" To us it's a positive surprise. We love it!

MRR: You are very aggressive and you look pretty savage at your shows. How is the public's reaction?
Our concerts are not a fake-we like to call it "Performances in Real Time," where there's always space for fantasy and reality. It usually gets chaotic and bruises appear. People are avid for action!

MRR: How was playing with Sylvain Sylvain from the New York Dolls? We know you're in touch with another musicians-tell us about them?
It was really good to play with him, he's very nice. We became friends and we keep in touch today. It's good to know that Sylvain is still playing with energy and making good music! Beside him we're in touch with Fugazi, Tim Kerr (who's gonna produce our next album), and Sonny Vincent (who invited us to join him in a documentary about his life and career).

MRR: What are you going to do next?
After the European tour, we'll be in the United States and Canada during June to promote the album "Women Non-Stop". At the moment, we're already preparing the songs for the second album which is gonna be recorded in the USA during this year.

Contact the band at Elevator Music, PO Box 1502, New Haven, CT 06506 USA
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New Disorder Records

Interview by Dylan & John.

MRR (Dylan): Alright, so here we are interviewing Ernst from New Disorder Records and since I am going to play D&D in a half an hour I am going to ask my questions first. So I like this band the Sissies who are on your label. How did you find them?

Ernst: I went on tour with them and played ten shows or something, on the road with The Gods Hate Kansas. Almost anybody I put out is somebody I've met, like, personally, up front, when I haven't met them before it sucks. It just falls apart. The Sissies are really cool and when we went on tour with them I found they stink... they are actually very impressive that way, they are very small and very stinky and we had a great time with them.

MRR (John): Healthy diets...

Ernst: I've seen them come out here on tour after we went on tour with them and they were wearing the same clothes they were a year and a half ago and they swear that they have changed them at some point in between but you couldn't tell...

MRR (John): You secrete broccoli from your veins when you're on such a healthy diet like they're on.

MRR (Dylan): What were the beginnings of New Disorder? Is it pretty much just you running things or have you been working with other people? Have you had partners at various times?

Ernst: It's pretty much me. Will has been helping a lot for the last three years, though he has very little time. He comes over a couple of hours a week and works at New Disorder and does a lot of work on the side, works with his bands, but yeah, it's been mostly me, most of the time.

MRR (Dylan): I know it is hard running a label and harder to make any kind of money. I'm curious, what kind of deal do you offer you bands?

Ernst: I have an amazing deal for my bands. The bands that have sold enough to make a profit have done well. They have always been very happy because what I do is what I learned from what Lookout Records' contract used to be and I think it still is, most big labels have a really good contract, I think Fat does too, the 60/40 split. Then I sell the bands the CDs at cost, which nobody else seems to do. That works out well for touring bands. Like DBS, I paid DBS about $1200 royalties and I sure they made at least double that in sales on tour.

MRR (John): Wow. That is pretty impressive.

Ernst: That's good for 2300 records sold. The bands like DBS that do well... I mean, I've done the math and if I was to continuously sell 2000 copies of things I'd be able to hire someone and pay them $15,000 a year part-time and I'd be able to pay myself $20,000 a year. It's interesting to me, because I know that my ratio of how much I spend on ads is the same as other labels and other labels are selling 20,000 copies and I'm like, "Why aren't you just raking in the money?" It shouldn't be a problem...

MRR (John): It's probably a number of factors.

(A knock on the door. Corbett enters with ice tap water on a serving tray for all...)

MRR (John): I mean you're putting out records that you like...

Ernst: Oh, look at this?! The maid is here!

(Water is passed about...)

Ernst (perplexed): Where did this come from?

MRR (John): Upstairs.

Ernst: I see.

MRR (John): The street...

Ernst: This building is interesting.

MRR John (drinking): I'm drooling. So, what is up with the American Steel record? Are you still pressing that?

Ernst: The vinyl or the CD?

MRR (John): CDs.

Ernst: I'm going to repress it through The Mob once I get the funds. Right now I am completely broke. I can't afford to repress it. It has been out for most of the summer, which they weren't happy with. They want them for tour. They get their record from me for two dollars and their Lookout records for five or six. They sell them all for ten, so mine are pretty nice.

MRR (John): That is a really nice deal.

Ernst: Scott was saying that they always pushed ours because they'd, y'know...

MRR (John): They'd make more...

Ernst: ...so much better, but I just couldn't afford to repress until the end of the summer hopefully.

MRR (John): It's a better record too.

MRR (Corbett): Yeah, it is a good record. Now they aren't as good.

Ernst: That has always been one of my favorite records, but I think it has been replaced by The Jocks and my comp.

MRR (John): Do The Jocks sell a lot of records?

Ernst: They sold a lot of their first CD, not as much of their second. They sold about eight or nine hundred copies of their first CD. The crappy little EP they recorded at Burnt Ramen.

MRR (John): Right on.

Ernst: They were so popular ,and I think that if they would have stuck around I think they would have sold at least as many of their second album.

MRR (John): What are your feelings on vinyl these days? I ask because I haven't been seeing a lot of vinyl on New Disorder.

Ernst: It's just too expensive for me to do. I did do a vinyl for The Def Poets Society because they agreed to pay for the mastering, but it works out to be ridiculous amount more than CDs. It costs five hundred dollars to master

anything, you have to pay twice as much to ship things… I get complaints from people all the time asking why I don't press vinyl and I'm like "You're the one person who wants to buy that." I pressed 500 American Steel records on vinyl and sold 2000 of the CD and maybe 150 on vinyl and lost the rest.

MRR (John): You lost them?

Ernst: Yeah, I got evicted and left a couple boxes at the house that I thought weren't vinyl…

MRR (John): Geez…

Ernst: It was a huge loss. But nobody buys vinyl, I mean nobody at all. It's incredible.

MRR (John): I do!

Ernst: Of course, they're for the five or ten people.

MRR (John): Why do you think it is that they still cost less than CDs?

Ernst: That is something I don't understand too and I was hassling the girl who was doing The Phantom Limbs merch stuff about that and her answer was, "Well, we are trying to get people to be interested in it." So why don't you press less? I don't understand. I mean I am one of the only people I know that charges more for it.

MRR (John): Yeah, we (Fleshies) had a big argument with AT about that.

Ernst: Yeah? What did they say?

MRR (John): Ultimately, their whole thing is just that that's the way the standard prices are set in stores and if you fuck with the paradigm too much, in terms of retail, then that…

Ernst: Yeah, no, and I understand that…

MRR (John): …that, they didn't really have a justification, there was no real justification, it's just that's the way the standards are set. It's just kind of a bunch of bullshit.

Ernst: I think people don't understand how cheap these things are to make in general. Y'know, CDs cost to the average person between fifty cents and a dollar to make, regardless of having any deals. And vinyl costs twice that. And that is just for the vinyl itself, not the printing. But CDs are costing record labels, no matter how big they are, somewhere around a dollar to three dollars with promotion, or more…

MRR (Corbett): Not anymore!

MRR (Dylan): Thanks to The Mob! (510-BAD-SMUT, can we plug?)

Ernst: Yeah, thanks to the mob over here… yeah, but if you're Virgin, they are costing you twenty three cents apiece, if you're Lookout they are costing you a dollar apiece with promotion. If you're me, they're costing you between a dollar and two dollars apiece. So why do they wholesale for ten dollars?

MRR (Corbett): I know in the past New Disorder has done split label things with Bad Monkey. I was wondering if you could tell us anything about what is going on with Bad Monkey and if still do anything with them or if you plan to do any other split label releases in the near future?

Ernst: As far as I know Bad Monkey is completely gone. He gave up. He just couldn't stand losing money anymore.

MRR (Corbett): That seems to happen when you use anarchy as a selling point…

Ernst: Yes, you have to go into this business with a joyful glee for losing money.

MRR (John): If you even wanna call it business, really…

Ernst: I don't talk to him much, which is unfortunate, but I think he just completely gave up and couldn't handle it, but I would like to do more split label releases… and I've done one recently, Love Songs is a split label release with Impatience Or Indifference and that is kind of a non-existent label. It's my friend Elliot who was working for Howling Bull and wanted to start a label but he hasn't gotten very far with it yet. Yeah, but it's great…

MRR (John): Hey, half the cost to you!

Ernst:…half the cost, more people working on it, that's the way I'd like to do it as much as possible.

MRR (John): We (S.P.A.M. Records) should do one at some point.

MRR (Corbett): Yes.

MRR (John): That would just make a world of sense.

Ernst: Yeah.

MRR (John): I'm gonna ask you a few of my loaded questions. So you have this amazingly detailed website…

Ernst: Yeah.

MRR (John):…and it kind of reminds me of, in certain ways, small BBS's back in the days before the web and I wanted to know if you ever had any involvement in that community?

Ernst: Yeah, absolutely…

MRR (John): Ah, I had a feeling…

Ernst: Well no, I mean, not in the sense that you think. I didn't hang out with hacker BBS's and stuff…

MRR (John): But were you on message boards?

Ernst: I wasn't on message boards. I mean I knew a lot about computers, but I didn't know anything about the internet, even in college. I did star working for a gay and lesbian BBS when I first moved into San Francisco.

MRR (John): That's what I'm talking about, not the internet.

Ernst: Yeah, and that's where I learned a lot of stuff, about how things work. That was really cool. I think we should have cashed in the blackmail potential 'cause it was this national gay and lesbian bulletin board…

MRR (Corbett): Is that were Shauners works?

Ernst: No, he works at Planet Out, which is different. They were a competitor for awhile. But, in the early days before the internet, people were dialing in on their phones so we had their address, we had their names… of the ten or fifteen thousand people who used it, we didn't find any senators or anything. It was really cool though because their was people and I could go like "Who's in North Dakota?" and there would be like fifteen or twenty people in North Dakota, you know they're in the closet and this is a chance to actually talk to people and hook up. It was really neat. We got a lot of funny letters like, "Thanks to you guys I left my wife of twenty four years and I am pursuing an alternative lifestyle." And I'm like, "Great, your wife's gonna come kill us."

MRR (Dylan): Along this line of questioning, I have to ask, what is your favorite character to play in Nethack?

Ernst: See, I don't even know what Nethack is.

MRR (Dylan): I guess I was making assumptions.

MRR (John): I think you were jumping into the Hallow Alliance. Shawn-Da-Lay-Boy Productions… Screaming Electron Era…

Ernst: I have started playing one video game recently, other than that I almost never play video games.

MRR (Corbett): What is it?

Ernst: Unreal Tournament.

MRR (Corbett): I love that game! It is the best. After eleven hours of straight play I wasn't dizzy anymore!

Ernst: It is really immersive and so funny and over the top because everybody explodes and it's got this announcer style voice that I really love.

MRR (Corbett): I played it once and I got this weapon called a Reality Alternator. Once I got a pitchfork! That one weapon that cold change reality looked all psychedelic.

Ernst: I always wanted to make a version of it that was drugs so you could, rather than shooting people, you could make their world more fucked up and hard to navigate through.

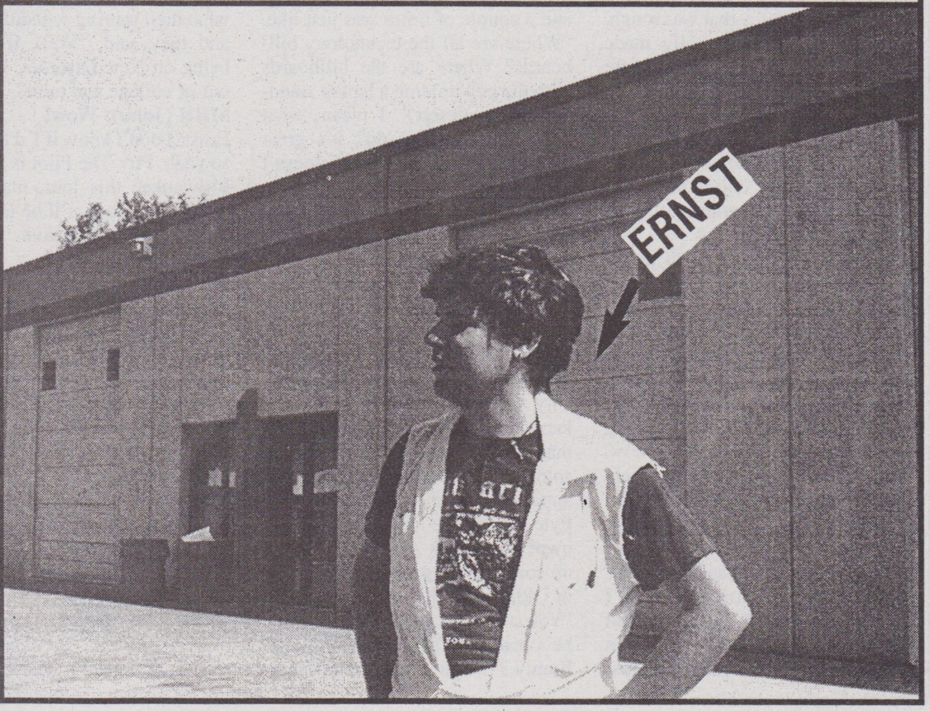
MRR (Corbett): That would be wonderful.

Ernst: It has this Bloodsport sort of announcer and my name online is always something like Fruity Pants and the announcer is like "Fruity Pants is on a rampage!"

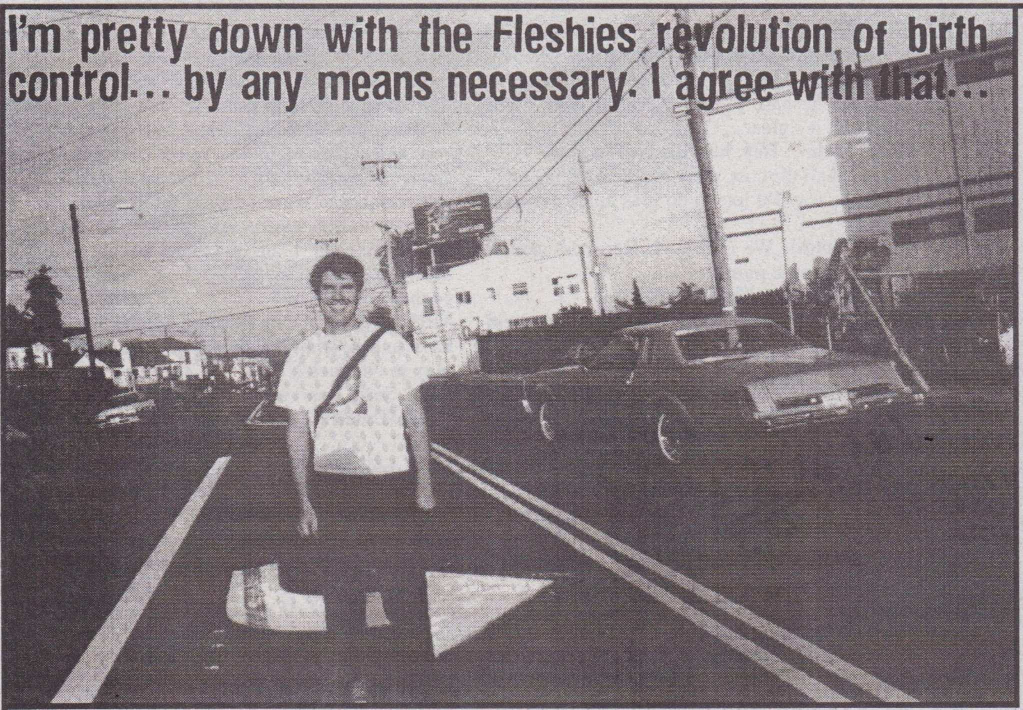
MRR (Corbett): Boy, I love that game.

Ernst: People will write me message like, "Are you gay?" and I'm like, "Yeah." Then I kill them.

MRR (John): Jumping back to the BBS topic,



I'm pretty down with the Fleshies revolution of birth control… by any means necessary. I agree with that…



Do you think that old style BBS communities are some how akin to, I guess, I hate to use the term, akin to punk rock in some ways, in terms that they were not really started for profitable purposes, that they just tended to be there and tended to put up for love using somebody's own server.

Ernst: It's hard to say because they were so immensely profitable.

MRR (John): Some of them…

Ernst: Well, yeah…

MRR (John): I guess I'm thinking more of ones I was involved with.

Ernst: Yeah, and those hacker ones are pretty neat and were pretty neat, but then it's hard to tell because then I'd meet a lot of those people in person 'cause I'd go to 2600 meetings and boy… that was rough. That movie *Hackers* really made things look great… There were women involved in it? Uh, no…

MRR (John): Yeah, no shit…

Ernst: I feel really nervous about the idea of community on the internet or community online because I think people exaggerate stuff and hide a lot of other things.

MRR (Corbett): It's a myth that it brings people closer together.

Ernst: I think it makes people have a constant state of road rage.

MRR (John): They can get away with saying anything and then go somewhere else immediately.

Ernst: They can say anything they want. They want everything now. Most of the time in just makes them bigger assholes. Certainly, myself, I've seen the internet as just one big more expanded way to make prank calls. That's been my approach to it.

MRR (John): A giant billboard. I like the fact that you had that program on www.newdisorder.com that just crashed your computer and opened tons of windows.

Ernst: Yeah, I have to bring that back.

MRR (John): It made me so fucking mad, but I could stop laughing.

Ernst: I've got much more insidious things I can do to people. People are still scared. They are like, "I'd like to look at your website, but I'm afraid." And that's fine.

MRR (John): Yeah, you website reminds me of old hacker BBS's. That's awesome. Simultaneously, anti-technology and yet proficient at it.

Ernst: I really am very anti-technology. I was on tour with The Gods Hate Kansas and Doug was working for a big tech advertising firm and a couple of times was just like, "Where are all the technology billboards? Where are the billboards with the guy holding a laptop standing in the desert?" I mean, what does this company do? It's great that the rest of the world doesn't care. It's weird.

MRR (John): They're just starting to get the cell phone. Hey, what do think about the fact that New Disorder has a full-blown cult in the upper Midwest and Great Lakes area?

Ernst: That's great. I love the Midwest. Our cult in Oklahoma City seems to be waning. I don't know. It is pretty impressive. I think that when I was in Jack Acid we sold all of our records to Oklahoma apparently. Robert from Artimus Pyle told me the first record he ever owned was Jack Acid, and I called up some booking guy the other day in Oklahoma City and he was like, "You still at the same address?" and he's reading off the back of a Half Empty 7". Which of course, everybody has… I like the Midwest a lot. I'm really excited about Lincoln, St. Cloud, places like that… Where else have you encountered it?

MRR (John): Milwaukee people.

Ernst: That's true. I'd like to put out a record by Modern Machines.

MRR (John): Fucking great band.

Ernst: They're doing a split with another band, which is probably going to be the same sort of great band and if I can get a good recording and if I ever get the money to start putting things out again, I'll definitely put it out.

MRR (John): They'd be down, I know. They tour a lot.

Ernst: They were so excited to a level that kind of made me think, they were like, I was asking they what their touring schedule was like and they said, "Well, if it meant being on New Disorder, we'd drop out of college and tour."

MRR (John): Wow!

Ernst: I don't know if I'd like that… so yeah, Pirx The Pilot is playing in Milwaukee this tour, maybe even Green Bay, so that'll be interesting.

MRR (John): Have all your bands toured?

Ernst: Yes. Well, not the ska band. But that wasn't a New Disorder band. All my personal bands or all my New Disorder bands?

MRR (John): Your personal bands.

Ernst: All my bands. Rumor 39 didn't tour.

MRR (John): How many bands have you been in at this point?

Ernst: Bands that have recorded and released things: I've been in Jack Acid, Bumblescrump, Half Empty, Skinhead Magnet, the ska band which was called Ska King Crab, I played drums… the Darts didn't record, Rumor 39, The Gods Hate Kansas and now Pirx The Pilot.

MRR (John): Ska King Crab. That's awesome.

MRR (John): I should dig up our old band The Ska Queens.

MRR (Corbett): We ruled!

Ernst: It was amazing, we had a 250 pound lead singer, ten people, a tuba…

MRR (Corbett): Tuba rules.

Ernst: It was when I was I college. We just played colleges and we were super successful. we'd play for 500 people. We were crappy. We sucked. We did a cover of "Take On Me" by A-ha. It was funny, the singer couldn't sing it. He couldn't hit the high notes. I couldn't play the drums. People loved it.

MRR (Corbett): And there was a tuba!

Ernst: And we'd play these shows and everybody's bouncing up and down at the same time, the floor was shaking, the stage is collapsing, we were wearing suits …it was just really funny.

MRR (John): The Bob Weirdos (S.P.A.M. Records staff band) started as The Ska Queens in 1991, but I don't think we ever actually played ska.

Ernst: I'm still waiting for ska to become so unpopular that it makes a comeback and we can start doing it again.

(Everyone chuckles.)

MRR (John): Sorry to hear that…

MRR (Corbett): Please wait another ten years.

Ernst: Not ska, but a song with a backbeat anyway, like when the American Steel record came out I got so many reviews that were like, "This is ska. I hate it." *Heartattack* said, "Pick it up, pick it up, throw it out the window." So many reviews like that, I'm going, "This isn't ska!"

MRR (John): Jesus Christ. Ooow… so… what kind of revolution are you really advocating? You seem to be quite up on that lately.

Ernst: Yeah, I've been working on a new one. It shifts a lot. I'm pretty down with the Fleshies revolution of birth control… by any means necessary. I agree with that. I'm definitely into the Unabomber approach of destroying all technology. I think the Unabomber was a kind…

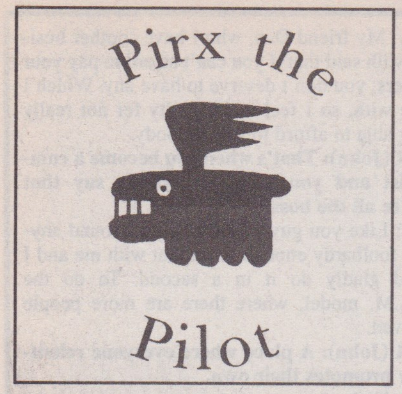
MRR (John): A little direct action.

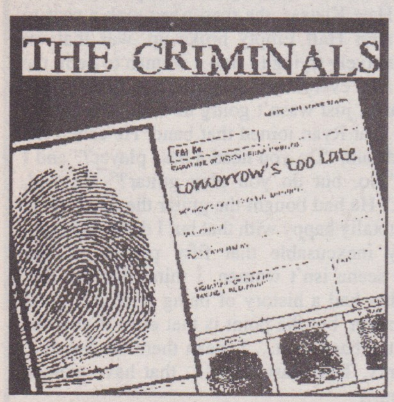
Ernst: Yeah, a little direct action and kind of dumb. But I like the idea that at any moment, your mail could blow up. That keeps life a lot more interesting.

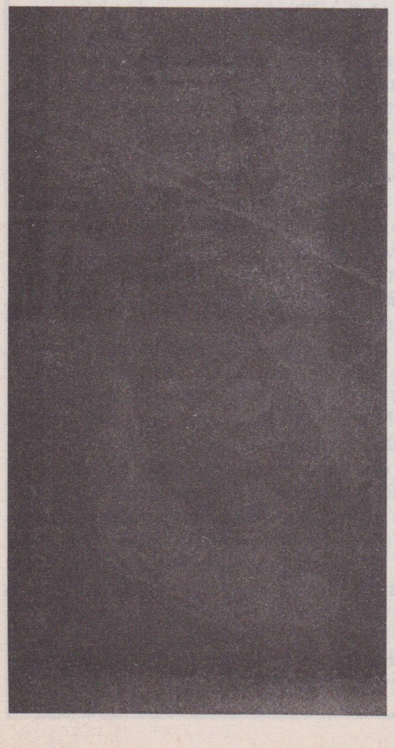
MRR (John): It is certainly proactive.

Ernst: I've been organizing the background to launch a new campaign since I've been bored and haven't had a lot of work… I need to wait for my hair to not be funny

colors. I want to organize a campaign with some of my more disgruntled straight-laced friends in SF who are similarly capable of this… of going and getting temp jobs and just destroying the company that they work for.
Ernst: You can do it really easily.
MRR (John): That's fucking awesome.
Ernst: Get placed in a temp job… I'd go visit my girlfriend when she was the office manager at this company. She didn't really want to break everything, she stole everything, but I would go in and break people's computers when I was there for lunch.
MRR (John): Wow.
Ernst: She got mad at me occasionally when I'd do that, but the point is that whenever you're a temp, you're always the only one in the office who knows what they're doing. People are so incompetent in the business world. Every time that I've had a job and I'm really insecure and I think that I'm an idiot and that I don't know what I'm doing, it just takes me a little while to realize that everybody else is a bigger idiot… which is astounding to me. I think it's a really good plan, to target the company, get a job and really you'd only have to work there for a day and you could bring it down. Especially if you know a little about computers because nobody there knows anything about computers.
MRR (John): Could you write a short primer for that for "I Hate America"?
Ernst: I should work on that. I have a bunch of things, general sort of mischief that I'm interested in, one of which is the web based campaign to identify and disable surveillance cameras around the city.
MRR (John): Beautiful idea.
Ernst: These are all the to secret ideas that I haven't unleashed on the public yet. Another one is that my girlfriend just did an art project which was about rust… it turns out that heavy grain salt and hydrogen peroxide will rust anything instantly, so makes any metal look like it's a hundred years old. It's great!
MRR (John): Are these different concepts that have blossomed out of that shadowy reactionary club…
Ernst: …That I am unaffiliated with.
MRR (John): You being the one that did not send me the emails about letting me know when it did not happen. (winkwink)
Ernst: When notice came, the hors d'oeuvres got better and better for our meetings and people, fewer and fewer people came. The last one we had, we had baked brie and chips and French bread and all sorts of alcohol …and there were two straight edge kids there…
MRR (John): Sounds like you could smell the bourgeoisie. I enjoy reading your essays.
Ernst: So yeah, I'm gonna try and reform that and take it to the streets… I was working on making a t-shirt that says, "The Steering Committee Does Not Exist". It is sort of unclear to me even what I even want… when I write those things I screw with the language… I'll look at the webpage and read something I wrote ten years ago and I'll realize I had no idea what I was thinking.
MRR (John): I can understand.
MRR (Dylan): How were you feeling at the time?
Ernst: Incoherent?
MRR (Corbett): A lot of the writing seems to be, not necessarily off the top of your head, but true in the way that it is coming out at that point. Maybe you were thinking internally, but it stays true to how you were feeling…
Ernst: It rings true to you, but it doesn't to me because I don't know what I was thinking… No idea…
MRR (John): We should make sure that nobody knows that though…
MRR (Corbett): Your writing is something I really enjoy reading.
Ernst: Good. Thanks. I want to write more. There is a new magazine being done by the people who used to do *Flipside* called *Razorcake*. It's amazing. All the writing in it is good. It's from LA, go figure…
MRR (Corbett): Is Shit Ed involved?
Ernst: I think he is. It's great. It's so much better that all these zines that are like, y'know, six months of zines about how we're not *MRR*, but we're better than *MRR*.
MRR (John): I think we all know which one you're talking about…
Ernst: We're not going to mention names, but there are like four of those though. This magazine was amazing. I wrote the editor of *Razorcake* and got instant responses. I said I wanted to contribute. He says, "We have too many contributors, but I'll read your writing." He writes back and says, " I really like your writing." It's great, I'm actually getting responses from somebody as opposed to *Punk Planet*, who rarely even reviews my stuff, let alone even consider my writing submissions. They don't even write me back to tell me my stuff's crap.
MRR (Corbett): They've only given S.P.A.M. bad reviews.
Ernst: I did get a *Punk Planet* review that was an "Ernst is my own personal pope" review that I've got framed and blown up. It starts with the phrase, "Ernst of Jack Acid greatness…" I get a lot of mentions of my old bands…
MRR (Corbett): Now I see what you mean by that pariah comment you made the other day… that sucks. Why do they put you in that light, do you think?
Ernst: Yeah, it sucks…
MRR (Corbett): I mean it's not like you go around wheatpasting 8x10s of your face around.
Ernst: No, I don't. I just got one in the J Church mailer, it's all about, "Ernst!" Any band I'm in is always a complete collective. I've never been in a band that everyone doesn't have equal input in. There may be a common theme, but that common theme is just that I'm in the band. It's not that I direct everything.
MRR (Corbett): Maybe it's because you do so much with so many people, it is easy to accuse you of trying to have an "umbrella" maybe? When it comes down to it, you're a catalyst in my opinion.
Ernst: I don't know what it is… I started the label and put out Skinhead Magnet because no one is going to put out a band with the name Skinhead in it. I still have like 40 of those left of the 700 I pressed. Right when I put it out, I got an order for fifty from Germany. That made me really nervous. At the same time, they paid up front and they got what was coming to them… if they were racist, then they're not gonna like it. If they weren't, then it was totally cool.
MRR (John): So I think I asked this earlier, Do you pay your interns or are they mere child labor and cannon fodder for your revolution?
Ernst: I actually pay well. I pay them ten dollars an hour, but he doesn't get that many hours.
MRR (John): That is pretty good.
Ernst: I have just started working with this girl Julia, who shows up to put things in packages and stuff. I haven't been paying her, but I have been trying to inundate her with free CDs. I feel guilty. My friend Dan, who I have another business with said that if you can't afford to pay your workers, you don't deserve to have any. Which I agree with, so I feel really guilty for not really being able to afford to pay anybody.
MRR (John): That's when you become a communist and you make everybody say that they're all the boss!
Ernst: Like you guys! See, I haven't found anybody foolhardy enough to do that with me and I would gladly do it in a second. To do the S.P.A.M. model, where there are more people involved.
MRR (John): A place where everyone relentlessly promotes their own.
Ernst: Yeah.
MRR (John): Which is good… I noticed on New Disorder Soda that you included a note in regard to the lack of women musicians on the record and how you feel this is a bad thing, a misrepresentative oversight, and I've also noticed that in all but one of your bands, at least the ones I am familiar with…
Ernst: Most of them have had women in them. Rumor 39 didn't, but it didn't matter because Chris and I were relatively androgynous, The Gods Hate Kansas didn't.
MRR (John): Most have though… Do you feel that the Bay Area underground scene is doing an adequate or inadequate of presenting women in active creative and musical roles?
Ernst: I think it is doing an inadequate job. The Gods Hate Kansas, the reason we took a year to form after Half Empty broke up, was that we were actively trying to find a woman to be in the band. And everybody who tried out, even by my standards, just wasn't going to work. I'm totally happy that Ryan joined that band. He called me up and said, "Do you need a bass player?" and I said, "No, but do you play guitar?" He said, "Sure." He had bought the guitar the day before. I was totally happy with that but I think it is completely inexcusable that fifty percent of our music scene isn't women. I think that the Bay Area has had a history of being relatively good for women, but the point is that even if you can point the bands out… I mean there are bands… Subtonix, The Blast Rocks!…that have women in them…
MRR (John): The Lies.
Ernst: Yes, but the problem is that the overwhelming majority, even at Gilman shows, are still male. I think there are a lot of things going on in the punk scene that don't have to do with being in a band. There's organizing… I've seen in a lot of places…
MRR (John): Valid roles…
Ernst: …valid roles that women have fulfilled, but no matter what it is, zines seems to have a lot more women than bands do. That's just anecdotal, sort of evidence that I have for that… y'know, no matter where you go, the scene is still horribly exclusive.
MRR (John): Minus Olympia, maybe.
Ernst: Yeah, Olympia. There's a couple of other places I've been on tour where it's been pretty nice. Mississippi, we played there and every band that we came into contact with, about five or six of them, were all coed. That was great. It is really frustrating to me here in the Bay Area that in so many positions of power there are men. I don't know how to address it really. I'm not going to like a band just because there are women, they've got to be able to play well too.
MRR (John): Yeah, they still gotta rock…
Ernst: I don't know how to approach it other than to enable women involved in the music scene… whenever possible.







MRR (John): I'd like it to be more of a situation were it would be a even enough ratio that bands could simply just be judged on merits... were people wouldn't look at it like one of two things, which people tend to do around here that I've noticed, with women in bands, which is like,... well, she's a woman, she's obviously not going to rock as much or she's a woman, she automatically rocks.

Ernst: The thing is you shouldn't even have to do a double thought. You shouldn't even have to be like, oh she's good for a girl or she's bad for a girl... It's ridiculous.

MRR (John): Yup, it should just be even.

Ernst: What to do? I am really proud that New Disorder, not just the bands that I've been in, but we've put out lots of bands with women in them. The Sissies, Soda Pop Fuck You... I think I've got a pretty good ratio. There were some oversights on the comp, but even if I had include those bands it still would have been overwhelmingly male.

MRR (Corbett): I mean, what are the population statistics, aren't there more women in the world?

Ernst: Yeah, there are more women in the world! Yeah, I don't get it...

MRR (John): Women aren't as encouraged to follow those paths from earlier on, so it hard, so many societal subtexts, y'know?

Ernst: Now that the punk scene is swimming back and forth, not really clear whether of not it's a mainstream phenomenon... I mean Blink 182 is all about getting on stage and telling women, "Show us your tits." and stuff. That is not going to be terribly helpful. So much of it is about being really tough...

MRR (Corbett): The dude factor.

Ernst: Yeah, not helpful. There are a lot of tough women bands... certainly wouldn't want to try and get in a fight with Tribe 8.

MRR (John): Or Gravy Train for that matter. Maybe the solution is for male musicians to be as effeminate and androgynous as possible?

Ernst: I saw *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* the other day and it made me want to dress up more.

MRR (John): It is good to fuck with gender roles.

MRR (Corbett): Maybe one thing fellas can start doing is to not getting appalled when they hear a girl tell a fart joke.

MRR (John): Yeah, seriously. Or when you hear a girl fart really loudly.

MRR (Corbett): I think of Eggplant. I don't know why.

MRR (John): Eggplant as a woman?

MRR (Corbett): No, as a fart. A walking fart.

MRR (John): A walking fart?

MRR (Corbett): He reminds me of Pigpen. I'm just mad he's not here. Hopefully he's in transit. Oh, Eggy...

MRR (Dylan): He's probably at the library.

MRR (Corbett): Ernst, you've know Eggplant for awhile?

Ernst: I've known Eggplant ever since his Blatz band was torturing my life.

(laughter.)

MRR (John): How was he torturing your life?

Ernst: I played probably thirty shows with Blatz in my life and every show with Blatz involved stuff being thrown at the audience or the stage being wrecked.

MRR (John): I remember.

Ernst: I played in Chico after Jesse dumped about three bags of miniature marshmallows on stage. You couldn't lift your foot off the ground.

MRR (John): I remember Jack Acid tried to keep up with it a little sometimes. There were some times were you guys were a little more confrontational or at least a little more "assault factor" than I've seen in bands since.

Ernst: I definitely like to mess with the audience. At Gilman, this last weekend, I made up a seven page booklet, I made about seventy of them, full of just pictures of monkeys with a poem by Rudyard Kipling. I wrote a song where the lyrics are, "I'm looking at the monkey and he's looking at me." It can be sung to any tune. So I handed this out and after three or four songs I said, "Turn to page four." Everybody turns to page four. They're still looking at pictures of monkeys and I say, "Read along." and they read along. The one line of the Rudyard Kipling poem. Audiences are malleable and it is fun to do stuff like that to them. It's a little confrontational.

MRR (John): Confusing!

Ernst: Yeah, you are a little more physically confrontational.

MRR (John): Yeah, y'know. Just different styles. Confounding people is highly entertaining.

Ernst: That's my style.

MRR (Corbett): I watched The Gods Hate Kansas perform once behind a curtain.

Ernst: I was really proud of that. I was sad there weren't more people there.

MRR (Corbett): There was a puppet show as well?

Ernst: We did a puppet show as well. My girlfriend and my friend Elliot were the puppeteers and I got four socks and I cut out little instruments and then we played behind the curtain, backlit so no one could see us. The puppeteer's arms got really tired and they got really angry and bitter at me. It was sort of the non-event, like we're going to have a show, but you're not going to be able to see us. I'd actually like to do that again or something like it.

MRR (John): An anti-show.

Ernst: Exactly, we'd play but we are going to separate ourselves from being the performers.

MRR (John): You really should have served brie at that. One of my lingering memories form high school is you running around in a dress at the last Jack Acid show.

Ernst: I played in Bumblescrump with the rule that I would only play drunk and naked.

MRR (John): That's a great rule! That was the first six months of Fleshies actually.

Ernst: Josh and I were only going to go on tour if we were drunk and naked every night. So I had these great moments when I'd be on tour and Chrisser and Pat were very seriously trying to sell Lookout Records and Josh and I or Brett would stumble over completely naked and drunk and be all, "Hey! Buy this record!" and nobody would buy it, everybody would run. It was wonderful.

MRR (John): Yeah, there is a difficult thing with being the naked drunk trying to sell the records. It's really hard. We always fail miserably whenever I have to run the merchandise table.

MRR (Corbett): It ain't that band. You're a card carrying member of The Flaccid Cock Brigade. People don't feel as assaulted by a flaccid cock.

Ernst: You have to do something where people will buy the record to make you go away.

MRR (Corbett): Beckett does that.

MRR (John): I think Your Mother did a fine job of that. They were at some big show in Australia where nobody was really paying attention to the bands, but all these teens were making out, some city with the highest teen pregnancy rate in Australia, and they just started tapping these couples on the shoulders and saying, "Wanna buy a record? Wanna buy a CD?" They'd buy a just to get them to go away.

MRR (Corbett): You gotta hand it to that band for coming out for ten years with a chip on their shoulder.

MRR (John): Ernst, you seem to be doing really well at that. You seem to be doing really well at keeping a chip on your shoulder for well over a decade. That is an impressive achievement.

Ernst: Yeah, my general take on the world is, "You morons."

MRR (John): That's beautiful!

Ernst: Myself included. I'm not judgmental about that. I definitely include myself on the moron list.

MRR (John): Hey, how the hell can you afford to live and operate a label in San Francisco?

Ernst: I really can't. I was making a lot of money as a computer programmer for a long time. Right now, I'm not. Each month the rent is huge. Each month I come within days of not being able to pay my rent. This month is no exception. I'm really hurting right now for money. I'd really like to put out some new things. I don't have any money. The record label eats a huge amount of money every year, like ten thousand dollars. I spend a lot for recording and stuff like that. A lot of labels don't and I take pride in that. I want to spend a lot of money on it because that is sort of one of the things that I like is that I can take a band like The Jocks and give them this amazing recording, that they wouldn't have had otherwise and it shows what a good band they really are, but that costs a lot of money. I've been audited once by the IRS and that cost me a huge about of money. Right now, I owe the IRS another eleven thousand dollars in back taxes.

MRR (John): Christ! What can you do about that?

Ernst: I am paying it off $250 dollars a month. That's like rent in the East Bay. Scott pays $200 a month down in Palo Alto.

MRR (John): Not the East Bay, maybe far East Bay, but just think how revolutionary you could be in Pittsburg.

Ernst: It doesn't have very much to do with the record label. If I hadn't run the record label I'd be a rich person. I would be wealthy, but I have no regrets about that. I am frustrated that I can't make enough money to do more. When I have full time work, it's fine, but when I don't it's kind of rough.

MRR (John): If you were King of The Scene for one day what would you do? You know, the scene!?

Ernst: I would force all the bands to play a show together that don't usually play together. I actually want to do a project on this and see if facts support my general feeling that... we were trying to book a show with The Thumbs and it was being booked through Adeline. I know Billie Joe and it wasn't through him obviously, it was through whoever booking agent they had and so it ended up being... I don't remember the band names... they were bands I know, the point being, we didn't get on it, some other bands did and it was sort of the same bands that are going to always play those shows.

MRR (John): The Influents, One Time Angels...

Ernst: Yeah, and I've talked to these people and I know a lot of the people in bands like that, but I think there is this section of the scene that doesn't know any S.P.A.M. bands, that doesn't know any of my bands... when I was promoting the American Steel record I talked to so many people and they'd be like, "Who's American Steel?" People who are in the Bay Area scene! I remember vividly talking to Brian from Dead and Gone saying, "I love this new band I've put out." He had no idea who they were. There needs to be some... he's not a bad person, it's just that there needs to be some cross pollination. Everybody needs to be paying attention to each other is doing. I am more than happy to help out if there is something I can do. I have forwarded Lookout my store lists occasionally. I've traded promo lists with Lookout. Their list turned out to be worthless, because nobody on the Lookout promo list likes punk.

MRR (John): AT has got a good one.

MRR (Corbett): You're talking about providing a lot of rivers for people to go to, more so a mainline, something were everyone can take part. I don't know if I should talk in terms of "The Big Show," but when it comes down to it, to rely on people and not underestimate their ability to affect large numbers of other people. It's kind of tangential, but I suppose there are a lot of different kinds of things going on... and the idea of bringing those things together, not necessarily so everyone is informed, but maybe to were it might help people get a semblance of a clue as to what might really be going on...

Ernst: There are so many resources. People aren't even using them.

MRR (Corbett): You provide resources. Through your webpage you are giving people tools.

MRR (Dylan): I really like that about your webpage. There is a lot of helpful information to help people put out their own records.

Ernst: That is something I have been trying to do is to find ways. I am very efficient at organizing resources and getting them to people. I think that there should be interaction. The people at Fat Wreck are all really nice. They should know that these other bands exist. They don't have to do anything about it.

MRR (Corbett): They do though. I would like think that they, I don't want to say that they are all snide, but they catch wind of something and a lot of times it is not even worth it to them to pay attention or to even act like it came their way.

Ernst: I am interested more in people knowing at this stage than I am about actually doing anything about it. I don't expect people to show up to shows, but I do expect them to know what is happening in the Bay Area. I could be part of that hipster shit, I know everybody.

MRR (John): The problem is you're too much of a commie. There are people who don't want to spread out their resources. These people kind of make a living off of things, to some degree and they have their resources and they don't want them to be so broad, because they don't figure everyone deserves them or should have access to them.

Ernst: I wanted to name one of our records this, this thing called Hanlan's Razor, "Never attribute to malice, that which can be explained by stupidity:" If I ever have a chance to come up with a grand conspiracy against me... I tend to discount conspiracies, I tend to discount any malice.

MRR (John): I don't think it is necessarily malice.

Ernst: Not necessarily unconscious malice, which I think there may be. I feel that people are mostly just not paying attention. That is what I'd do if I was King of The Scene.

MRR (Corbett): What are some of the releases you are hoping to get out in the next year?

Ernst: Sacrilicious. They are all traveling now. I would like for Quest For Quintana Roo to record an album. They are very popular. They are really good. I would like to get something out of them before they all vanish to college or whatever they're gonna do. Like to do a Lab Rats CD. Will's band, they're great. The Secretions would be one of the first things I'd do if I got the money.

MRR (John): Aaron Elliot told me that "Freaks Like Us" is one of the, like, five best punk songs he's ever heard.

Ernst: When I see them live, I didn't get the perfect punk I hear on their amazing record. I like the feeling of that record. I'm sure Pirx The Pilot will do something within the year.

MRR (Corbett): A lot of folks are counting on you to keep on keepin' on.

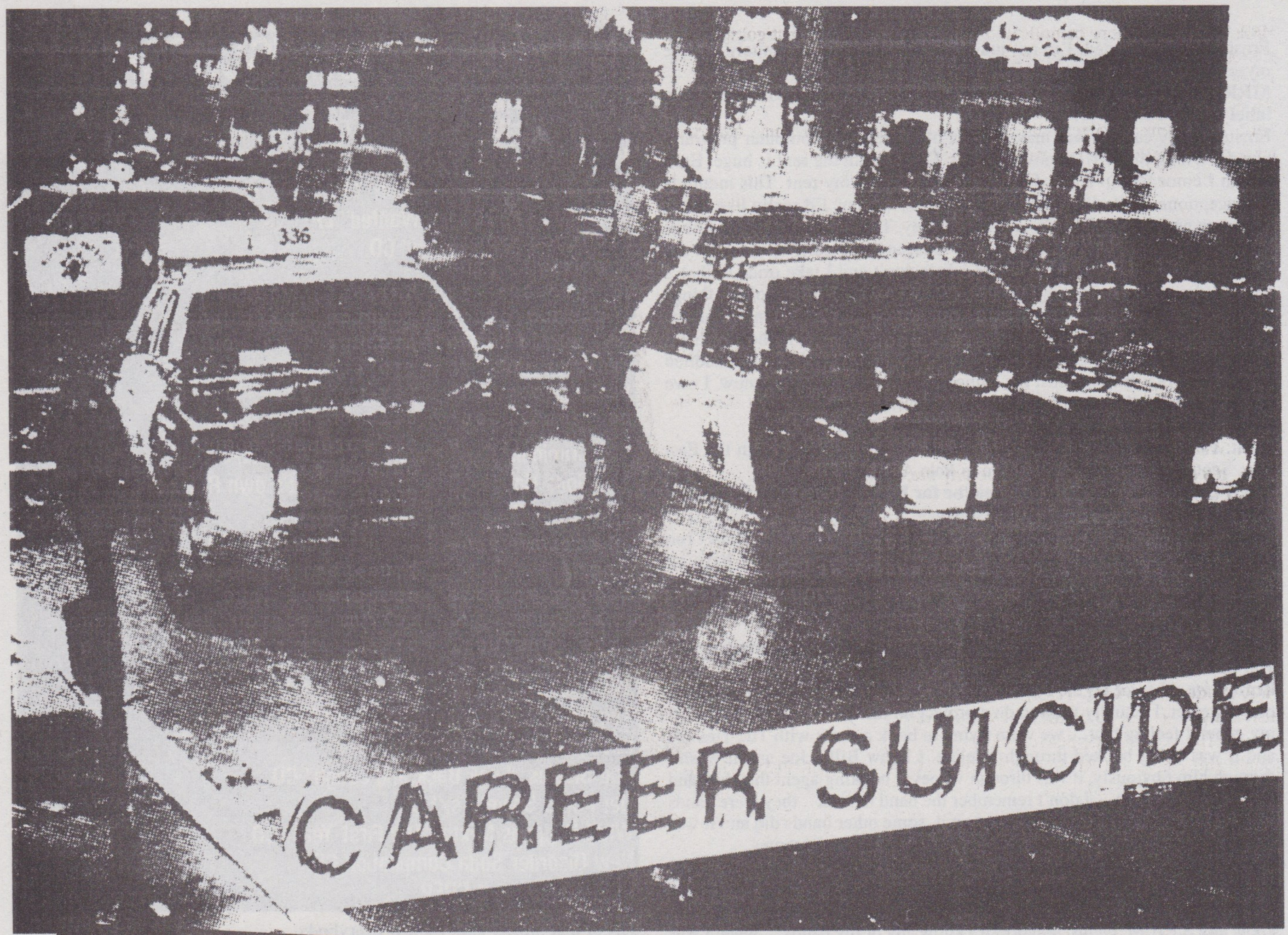
Ernst: Revolver owes me a lot of money right now and hopefully they'll pay me and I'll pay all of that to my parents. I borrowed three thousand at the end of the summer. But maybe they'll be a little left over to put out records.

MRR (Corbett): It seems like they say it's the easiest to do things when it is the hardest for the individual.

Ernst: I wish I could get these releases out, but hey we're going to Chico this weekend and I've always been able to steal at least a little something from the coke machines up there.

NEW DISORDER DISCOGRAPHY:

Skinhead Magnet "We Work, We Dream, We Die, Time Flies" 10"
Half Empty "Welcome Home" EP
Half Empty / The Pist split EP
The Leftovers "Gravy Train" EP
American Steel "Hope Wanted" EP
Jack Acid "Discography" CD
Rumor 39 s/t EP
Half Empty "People are Basically Good" CD
Soda Pop Fuck You s/t CD
American Steel s/t CD
Wet-Nap s/t EP
Soda Pop Fuck You "Timing is Everything" CD
The Criminals "Tomorrow's Too Late" CDEP
The Gods Hate Kansas "Mischief is it's own Reward" CD
The Cost s/t CD
d.b.s. "Some Boys Got it, Most Men Don't" CD
Hers Never Existed "A Static State of Developmental Disability" CD
The Jocks "Time Machine" CDEP
Enemies s/t CD
The Gods Hate Kansas "For Snakes" CDEP
The Jocks "The Top Three Answers on the Board" CD
The Quest for Quintana Roo s/t CDEP
Love Songs CD
The Sissies "Look Back and Laugh" CD
Def Poets Society s/t CD
What Happens Next? "The First Year" CD
New Disorder Soda Compilation CD
Pirx the Pilot s/t CDEP



CAREER SUICIDE is a relatively new local group that feature Martin and Noah from Equalizing-X-Distort. (Equalizing-X-Distort is a weekly hardcore punk radio show from the Toronto area). But CAREER SUICIDE is more than just a radio show band. The band was formed from members of various local bands from the last little while. Martin Farkas is the singer and has an F.U.s sounding style. Martin was in BORED OF EDUCATION and FUCK JONAH, bands that largely form the backdrop to this group. Noah Gadke plays bass and has played bass in FUCK JONAH and GOJIRA. Jonah Falco, the namesake behind FUCK JONAH plays in a million other bands including FUCKED UP and SCARE TACTIC. Jonah is the guitarist in CAREER SUICIDE and brings a kaleidoscope of early 80s thrash to the sound. And Eric Smith, is the drummer and played drums in FUCK JONAH and PHALLOCRACY. The band recently recorded one of the best demos that I have heard to come out of Toronto.

MRR: Can you fill me in on how you guys formed? Who meet who? Who got brought in and at what times?

Martin: It should start with the story of how FUCK JONAH began. Things got moving with a band called BORED OF EDUCATION, which was comprised of Jonah, Jesse (from SCARE TACTIC) and myself. We had been together for over a year when Jonah decided one summer to disappear on a two month canoe trip in the Yukon. Jesse and I were left without a bass player and instead of simply finding a replacement we made the decision, while Jonah was gone, to start a new band and fittingly dubbed it FUCK JONAH. We recruited Mark "Pesci" Rodenheizer and Noah Gadke to play guitar and bass (respectively), which spared me of having to play guitar and left me to focus on yelling, screaming, and maiming myself during frequent dives into the drum kit. That band went for a while, we had a few drummers, including Mark Jerret (of TEEN CRUD COMBO) but, we eventually settled on Eric Smith. We played a bunch of shows and recorded a few demos until I decided to ditch it all and move to the West Coast, almost breaking up the band. Soon after my departure though, Mr. Jonah Falco was actually recruited to play in FUCK JONAH...

Noah: ...and then we had to change the name.

Jonah: ...for one practice in Mark's basement.

Noah: ...and then he never called us again.

Jonah: ...and I joined FUCKED UP.

Noah: And then I took over as singer and our friend Chris joined on guitar and that didn't work out and Mark played bass. We played one show and that didn't work out.

Eric: Actually, we had to throw Mark out of the band because he became addicted to over-the-counter laxatives.

Noah: ...which also ruined our practice space.

Jonah: ... and one day Chris decided not to come to practice at 10:00 in the morning and they got me to sub and we wrote two songs and hence this band started.

MRR: That's a lot more complicated than I thought. I was just going to ask if CAREER SUICIDE was really just FUCK JONAH with a line-up change, but there are lots of changes in there?

Noah: There is a rich history behind this band.

MRR: There sure is. Where did the name CAREER SUICIDE come from and what's the significance behind the name?

Noah: Eric wanted to call the band THE PREENING METAL FAGGOTS, which we were none too fond of...

Eric: I was shouted down at every rehearsal.

Noah: We were trying to pick a name because we had a show coming up. This is when I was singing when after Martin had moved and before he moved back and he kept hinting at it and one day Eric said "You know it would really be career suicide if we called our band this." And I think we all sorted of looked at each other and did the finger point and said "That's our new band name."

Eric: Noah is taking too much credit for himself though, I don't think he was actually there.

Noah: Well I heard this story from Chris before he quit.

MRR: It's a great name. Does it have any meaning?

lots of laughter.

MRR: Obviously the story is there, but do you have something else that you have attached to it now because normally bands will develop a meaning.

Jonah: Every time we play we are committing a little bit of career suicide.

Noah: If people at work actually knew what I did with my spare time that might be a little perplexed to say the least.

MRR: Aside from BLACK FLAG, the F.U.'s, and ANGRY SAMOANS, who else are you willing to admit that you rip off?

Martin: The DICTATORS, BLACK FLAG...

Jonah: the F.U.'s, ANGRY SAMOANS, the FIX, more BLACK FLAG. The early Los Angeles/SoCal punk and hardcore scenes. Bands like X, the WEIRDOS, the AVENGERS, CIRCLE JERKS definitely have a strong impact on my song-writing.

MRR: Who else would you consider influences on the band's sound?

Jonah: Just early 80s bands from Boston and the Midwest, like the FIX...

Martin: ... like COALESCE and HIS HERO IS GONE... *laughter*

Noah: Early 80s stuff sums it up to a tee.

Eric: Yeah this one time Mark was eating pizza at practice and we made him laugh and a big piece of pepperoni came out his nose.

MRR: So that's an influence?

Noah: It was an influence for me. Stay away...

Martin: Well another "Marky Rottenheizer" influence came when I moved to Vancouver. In exchange for finding him cheap airfare and a place to stay he flew out with me on the condition that he would bring only a backpack full of clothes and ship a couple boxes of my records as his luggage. While we sat there, bored and underslept, he decided his big thing on the airplane would be to jerk off over every province of Canada. I don't think he actually succeeded but, try he certainly did. Let's just say, I might have lent him a hand.

MRR: OK, let me ask this, can you guys describe your sound?

Eric: I think Mark said it best when....

Noah: To who? To someone who is into hardcore?

MRR: Yes, let's use hardcore as the reference point because that's who will be reading this?

Jonah: Mike (FUCKED UP) described it pretty well one time when he said we are the F.U.'s meets ANGRY SAMOANS and JERRY'S KIDS with a little GANG GREEN.

MRR: I do hear lots of those Boston influences. I wanted to ask you about the demo. It is pretty amazing sounding. Where did you record this?

Noah: In our sweat-stained....

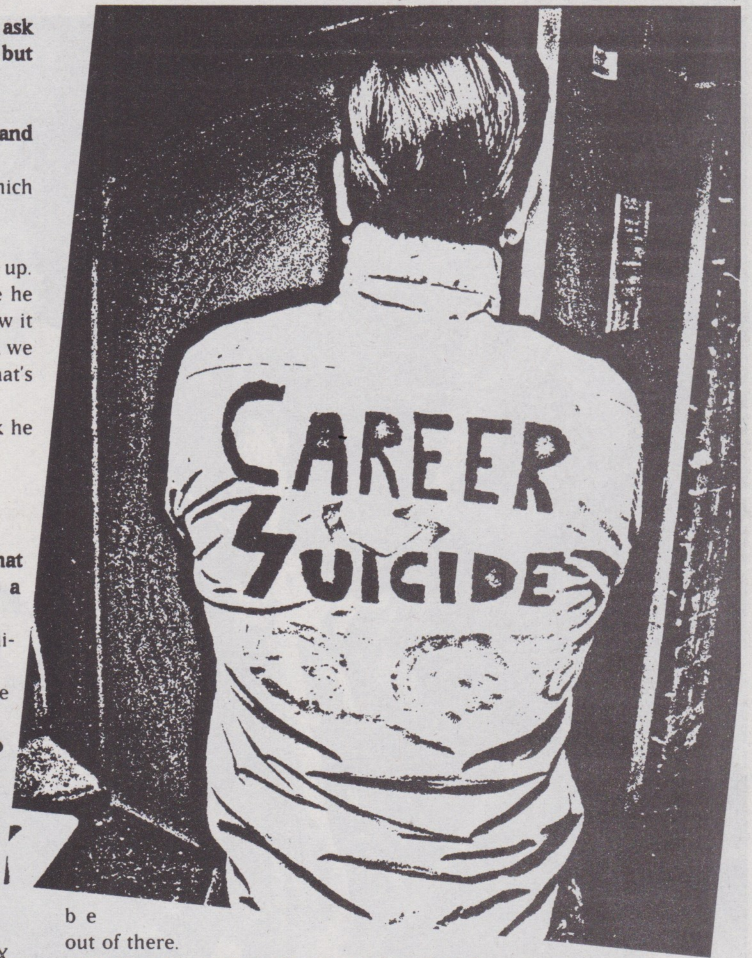
Martin: ....closet-sized basement,

Noah: .....which is soon to become my bedroom unfortunately enough. Martin rented a four-track and we ....

Jonah: Everyone was late and we ended up doing it in half an hour.

Martin: It almost didn't happen because the rental shop didn't give us all the proper equipment and the four-track wasn't even working. I had to take a cab back to the store, then all the way back to Eric's place, leaving us half an hour before Eric had to leave for work. It remarkably worked out anyway.

Noah: I think Eric's girlfriend's book club was coming over and we had to be out of there.



MRR: How long did it take you to record this?

Jonah: Originally we were going to practice and record from 7:00 pm till 9:00 pm and the equipment didn't get there and personnel didn't get there until 8:30 pm, so we set everything up in five minutes and whipped through all the songs once or twice....

Noah: ....without checking levels in anyway and then Martin and I went back to his place—which isn't as exciting as it sounds—and we listened to it and we couldn't believe that it actually sounded pretty decent.

Eric: People think we play so fast. It's not deliberate, it's just that this is the least punctual band on earth. We are forced to cram twenty songs into five minutes.

Noah: Cindy was banging on the door.

MRR: Do you have any plans for recording new material?

Martin: Yes. The recording we just did at CIUT tonight will come out on a CD as far as I know, unless it is absolutely terrible. We are now planning on renting another four-track in the next couple of weeks, recorded a second demo and soon after we will go into a proper studio to record a bunch of songs, hopefully for an LP.

MRR: Is there anyone who is going to be putting this out?

Martin: We don't know yet. We are probably going to record, pass it around to whoever has shown any interest and if people are still amused after they hear more of this crap then we'll sell to the highest bidder.

Noah: Shop our demo to the industry bigwigs, that sort of thing....

MRR: Are you guys going to try a studio this time?

Martin: Yes.

Jonah: Eric has suggested that we try the studio where PHALLOCRACY recorded.

MRR: Is it true that the demo doesn't really have any real lyrics. I heard that you didn't have enough time to write real lyrics and part of the time you are making up stuff, part of the time you are singing original lyrics to the ripped off riffs, and part of the time you are doing the equivalent of scatting?

Noah: That is completely, 100% not true.

Martin: Exactly, they are in Japanese. You just don't understand them, stupid!!

MRR: Do you have lyrics now?

Martin: Yes I do. I have translated the lyrics into English and there are some now.

MRR: Can you tell us about other things that you sing about?

Martin: Oh boy. I haven't actually learned the lyrics yet so, no, not really.

Noah: Dude, he totally called your bluff.

MRR: Well just tell me about some of the general ideas.

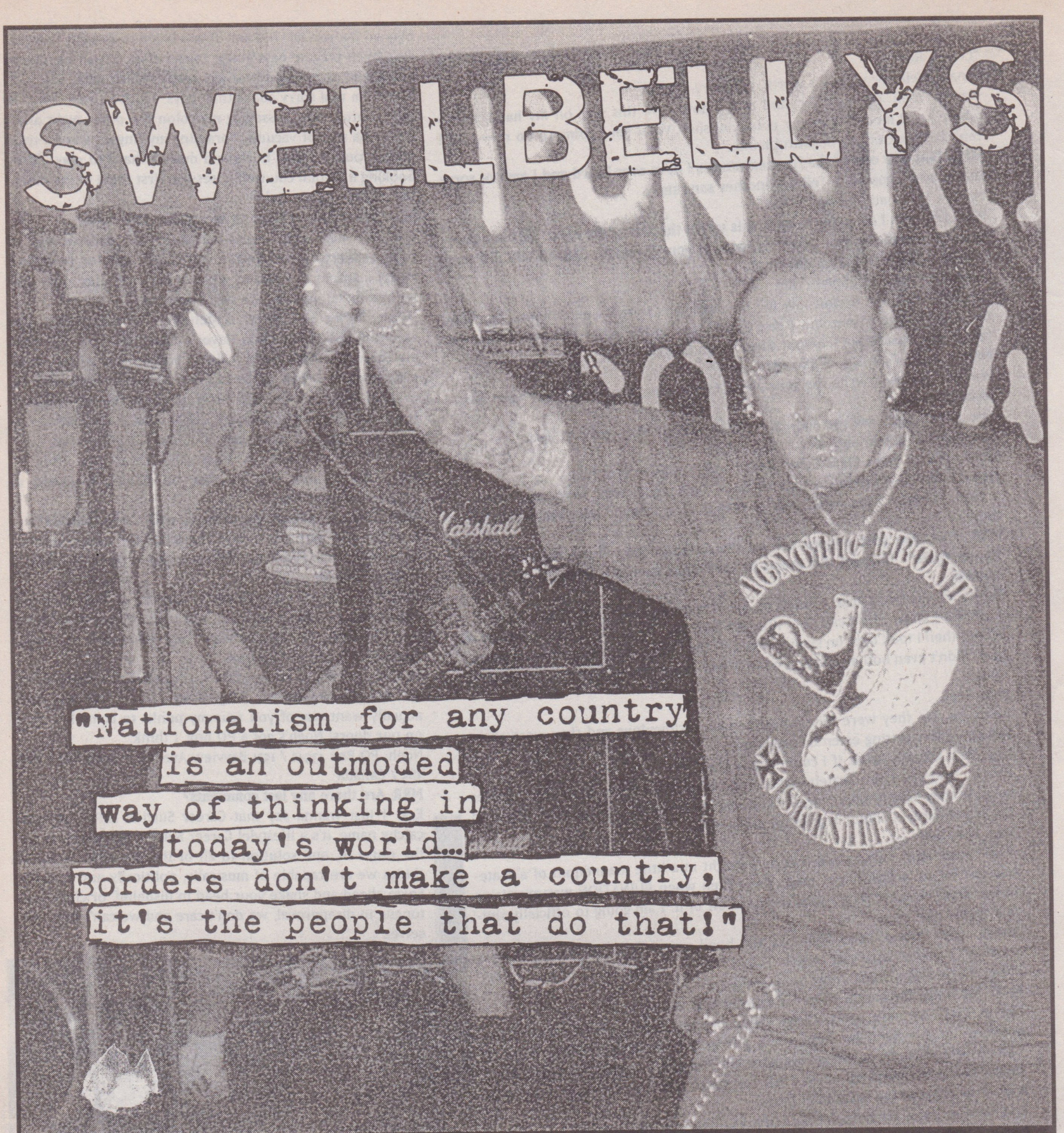
Martin: Sorry, that information's classified... Well, basically what I do is I keep them as vague as possible without being nonsensical and that way you can't necessarily accuse me of singing about anything.

MRR: There seems to be a lot of humorous takes on things.....

Martin: Fine! I will tell you about one song called "Crotch Rot." It is about something that happened this past summer, when HAYMAKER played on our radio show, and a few of us went skateboarding afterwards. Now, by skateboarding, I mean there were five or six of us including Jonah who brought a skateboard along. You'll have to keep in mind that I hadn't ridden on a skateboard in at least ten years, especially not one of these newer narrow ones, I was tired as it was past 4:00 in the morning but, despite all that I had reason to be impressed with myself as I was going (slowly mind you) down a hill and not falling off! Then Jonah the moron ran up behind me, pushed me from behind and I went flying face first into the concrete. I rolled around a bit then got up to curse at Jonah while kicking him repeatedly, aiming for the groin, but sadly missing the mark slightly each time. Once I'd regained composure, I felt around my body to ensure that nothing had been broken, it was then that I noticed blood pouring from my left hand down my arm. On my palms, there was actually more flesh exposed than skin! I took a cab back to my mom's place, where I knew no family members would be around, and I called up my friend Bryan in Vancouver because I could think of no one else that would be awake at that hour. To him I explained, "This idiot, Jonah, threw me off a skateboard and now I am bleeding to death. What do I do?" He realized my worst fears by suggesting that I disinfect the wound... I screwed the cap off the bottle of rubbing alcohol, poured it all over my hands, then proceeded to wake the entire neighborhood with my anguished screams. A few days had passed by the time my mom came home to ask why my hand was covered in bandages. She'd noticed also a thin red line leading from my wound all the way up my arm that didn't seem like a scratch. To be sure that nothing was wrong, I called up the local telephone health line who informed me that the line was a sign of infection and that I needed to have it treated immediately. I went down to the hospital alone, as my mother didn't quite feel like taking me, instead she just left with, "Call me if anything happens." I supposed she meant like an amputation! Anyway, I went down to the hospital just past midnight, but unfortunately, it being the weekend of the Caribana festival, it was quite a busy emergency room. I ended up waiting around until five in the morning before anyone could see me. Finally, the doctor escorted me into a room, strapped down my hand, scrubbed my wound with chemicals and a brush, provided me with some pills, bandaged me up properly, and wrote me a prescription. The very next day I filled it and began taking antibiotics four times daily. Now, one thing that they don't usually tell men, I guess, but they do tell women, is that when you are on antibiotics you are far more susceptible to a yeast infection. Me, having a non sawed-off shotgun (AKA uncircumcised penis), I suppose it would have been beneficial if I had been informed of this. As can be expected, a couple of days later I was itching like I had never itched before and I was scratching myself, but it merely made things worse. I took bath after bath, but it barely helped. I was at wits end thinking to myself, "Oh my god! It's going to rot off. I haven't even had sex in a while... if I caught something from a toilet seat I'm gonna shoot myself!" I reluctantly decided to once again call up the health line who told me the sad news that I did in fact have a yeast infection. The usual suspects were all present, cottage cheese residue, slight discoloration, and horrible itch.... Well, there you

have it, that's how I got a yeast infection from Jonah and that is the story behind "Crotch Rot."
Jonah: Well, for what it's worth, I'm sorry, Martin.
Martin: Yeah, thanks a lot. And plus I now have this scar on my hand, so my whole hand modeling career is fuckin' shot. What am I going to do now that I can't fall back on my beautiful hands?
MRR: That was one of the funniest stories I have ever heard and I am not sorry that it ever happened. Tell me another song story.
Martin: That's all you get.
MRR: OK, then I am going to open this up for the rest of the band. This is a question for everybody. One at a time, what is your favourite CAREER SUICIDE song from a lyrical standpoint and why?
Noah: That one, as of right now.
Jonah: Since I am responsible for that hilarious song I won't choose that one because I am to blame, but I don't know any of the other lyrics so I have no favourites. Musically I like that song "Fixed Charge."
Martin: Eric, what is your favourite song?
Eric: Did you ever write the song about Christopher Reeve and your false love?
Jonah: Noooo!!
Eric: I think you owe the audience and should tell that story, at least.
Simon: What is that about?
Jonah: Martin loves Christopher Reeve and let's leave it at that.
Noah: Literally. I would say that my favourite song is "Wild Weekend," which is a cover because we always seem to play it on a Sunday, after the weekend is done.
MRR: Man, you guys copped out on that one. Alright tell me about the song "Doom Ryder" because this seems to have some sort of reference Eric's email address.
Martin: It was Eric's idea, you tell us. What is the story behind "Doom Ryder?"
Noah: Oh I know this, I can field this one for Eric. This is when Martin moved to BC and then I took over on singing and we didn't have anyone to write lyrics and I just didn't even bother and Eric wrote these songs that were just utterly ridiculous...
Eric: Hey?
Noah: No, no, they were funny, but they were ridiculous and they were about skateboarders getting eaten by zombies.
Eric: Well actually Noah, if I could clarify that...
Noah: ...and then the skateboarders take back the streets from the zombies because they kept breaking up the concrete as they came up from the grave, so the skateboarders couldn't skate on the street.
Eric: Too right.
Noah: ...and then I might add that he brought in a little mannequin of a skateboarder for us, which is our mascot and then when RUINATION was practicing in our practice space they broke the head off of it. I am going to officially shit-talk them right here.
Jonah: ...and I noticed that Mike has that hood ornament on his hat right now, so what's the deal with that Mike?
Mike: Martin had a yeast infection everyone.
MRR: What are the band's plans for touring and playing out?
Martin: Well, we have been talking. Unfortunately, Eric's girlfriend is possibly breaking up our band by accepting a job to publish Harry Potter books in Vancouver and taking our drummer with her. Though, I shouldn't complain as I almost broke the band up when I left for Vancouver but, Eric is just so much more important to the band than I was...
Eric: Well actually, we didn't really blink when you moved Martin.
Martin: Yeah exactly. You are much more important than I am.
Eric: Actually, it seemed like an advantage.
Noah: Eric wears corrective eyewear which makes him more important in my mind.
Martin: ...and so Eric will be leaving us in late March but, what we are planning to do is a weekend mini-tour, as a going away sort of thing. We may do it together with Jonah's other band SCARE TACTIC. We are thinking of going ...well, we are not sure where we are going to go...but, we are considering playing Buffalo then going to New York City before returning to Toronto. Probably, just a three-day weekend tour.
Noah: Nobody discussed this with me.
Martin: Oh yeah, we forgot to tell you, Noah. We're thinking of getting Mark to play bass for those shows because we don't suppose you'll be able to make it for the whole weekend. While we're on the topic though, are you sure you wanna play on the record? Did any of you listen to this guy tonight? He's been playing bass/guitar longer than any of us, like 15 years, and all you can hear are snaps and clunks!
Noah: I'm real sorry about that, guys. Truth be told, I was in the bathtub, um, massaging my colon the other night and I created a sort of vacuum, spraining my fingers when I tried pulling out. It really hurts and made it hard to play. I'll be booking a mental counseling session first thing in the morning though. I promise!
MRR: What do you hope to accomplish as a band?
Eric: We just want the usual stuff: our records out of print/expensive/unattainable, our drinks paid for, perhaps a sleazy manager to guide us when we start to play lousy bullet belt metal, nothing we don't deserve.
Jonah: Bullet belt metal is definitely in our future. I've recently robbed Felix Von Havoc's closet, so the bullet belts are there. All that's left is to learn how to play guitar. We're also going to break up in two weeks and reform with no original members, but don't fret, the new line up will consist of Sab Grey on vocals, Jack Grisham on guitar, Springa on viola, and Raybeez on drums. Look out for us on tour.
Martin: That's if Raybeez" busy schedule allows. After all, there are rumors that he may be filming Weekend at Raybeez this summer!
MRR: How can people get in touch with Career Suicide?
Eric: Contact Martin at marfar@telus.net and please send us tapes (c/o Jonah Falco) for the Exploited "tribute" double CD we are compiling.
Jonah: People can get in touch by sending eyelashes, fingernails, locks of hair, love notes, and bodily fluids in an envelope marked "Eric Smith corrective eyewear" to Career Suicide's PO box in Tulsa, OH.
Martin: It's best to correspond through email I suppose, try me at marfar@telus.net, I'd give an address but, we don't actually want any of you scummy punks to come knocking on our doors! Noah's got a PO box, I think.
Noah: PO Box 43542 / 1531 Bayview Ave. / Toronto, ON / M4G 3B5 / Canada
MRR: Are there any last comments?
Eric: I just wanna say that Career Suicide isn't just some catchy name, it's a lifestyle! Career Suicide is the excuse for, the cause of, and solution to all of the disastrously stupid things we are capable of musically, politically and sexually. So go ahead and shake your head in disbelief, or cluck your tongue in disapproval, we don't care and we can't help ourselves.

SWELLBELLYS



"Nationalism for any country is an outmoded way of thinking in today's world... Borders don't make a country, it's the people that do that!"

MRR: Tell us about your current line-up and your releases?
Needs: Well, on guitar we've got Daz, Bruce on drums, myself Needs, on vocals and our new guy, Pedro, on bass. The last few releases had our old bass player on them, big Dave Donnelly, who's gone on to do whatever. The first two 7"s are out on Intimidation Records from Scotland. There's the Self Destruct 7" and the United Front EP, which is a split with England's finest, Assert. We've also got our first CD album out on Punk Rock Scotland called *Shut up and Listen!* Now that Pedro has joined the band we're planning a new album and single for the summer 2002, along with a split 7" with the Assailants from California which should be out in both the States and Britain on Intimidation Records by the time you're reading this.
MRR: The band plays part of the set naked. Is there some sort of philosophy behind this?
Needs: Yeah, we used to do the last song of the set, which was called "Shithole," naked. It was kinda like a fuck you to the authorities yeah! The song was about being jailed and having all your rights taken from you. One of our friends is in prison for a non-violent crime but he gets moved from jail to jail naked, handcuffed in a bodybelt. Anyway it was a kinda like our way of protest. We don't do it as much now as we used to. Once you've seen four fat blokes

naked, well you've seen it,yeah, ha ha.

MRR: Why do you think there are fewer people these days involved in punk from the housing schemes/council estates?

Needs: I don't know, really, I think a lot of it was down to people getting older and conforming. These days you've got to fit in to be able to live in the average housing estates. I think the drug scene moved a lot of people towards the rave scene. And for the young people the rave scene seemed to be just as rebellious as any punk scene when it started. Let's face it, you had like-minded people, regardless of age, sex, or color, going mental *en masse*! As one of my old punk friends says-fucking bloody good times!

MRR: What's your opinion on Scottish Nationalism?

Pedro: Nationalism for any country is an outmoded way of thinking in today's world. As the "global village" gets smaller, countries and their people are finding other ways to project their national identity without having to resort to insular political policy. Nationalism only breeds ignorance of different cultures-just look at the USA's foreign policy record. The American public's sheer bewilderment at the Middle East's resentment over recent years is a product of overzealous national pride. The other side of the coin, of course, is that foreign countries lose interest in the very national identity that nationalism strives to protect. As for law, education, and other localized phenomena, I think a well thought-out and practiced devolution policy allows regions to retain and develop in their own way without making others feel like outsiders. Borders don't make a country, it's the people that do that!

MRR: Has "devolution" improved the lives of Scottish people? if so why, if not why not?

Daz: Ha, ha, in a word, no! All that seems to have happened is that instead of one thieving self-serving piece of shit representing us, we now have three or four. All that's changed is that we are throwing three hundred million pounds into a new parliament building no one wanted apart from the MSP's. Although on a plus side (the only one I can see!) we may get a ban on fox hunting before the rest of the UK, which is cool. I think if anything, devolution has undermined our voice in the overall political scene in the UK, and anyway, how can you respect any of these people when the first debate they had was about their holiday entitlement and a pay rise!

MRR: I understand a friend of the Swellbellys recently died stage diving?

Daz: Yeah, that shit was pretty bad. Ewan was the guy who used to DJ for us when we ran a nightclub in Edinburgh. He was also a singer in a hardcore band we knew. The thing that pissed us off most about it all was the shit that got printed in the papers, it seems that they have to print lies all the time to sell papers, and that sucks! The truth as far as we know was that while attending the Mission nightclub in Edinburgh, there was an incident on the dance floor/stage area involving Ewan. Now, the press story differs from the version of events next. The press stated that Ewan lay unconscious for up to 40 minutes before his friends called for an ambulance. This is absolute bullshit! After hitting the floor pretty hard, he got up and seemed fine, not 100%, but hey! I think we have all been in similar states at some point in our lives. Anyway, he went out into the corridor for air and at some point he collapsed and the door staff called for an ambulance. Ewan later died in hospital from heart failure. Yes, he had probably been taking drugs and yes, he had probably drank too much, but that was Ewan, the life and soul of the party. In this game, you only find people as straight up as Ewan occasionally. He always had time for you and was respected by everyone who knew him. Whenever we played Edinburgh, Ewan was always the guy to get naked for a free t-shirt or CD. He will be greatly missed by us and our hearts go out to his family. R.I.P. Ewan.

MRR: Needles, is it true that when you visited the USA, you were mistaken for Keith Flint of the Prodigy?

Needs: Yeah, it's true! I'd only been in the States for a couple of hours when the police stopped us in St. Marks, Manhattan. I was with a couple of friends who looked as dodgy as myself ha ha! Anyway, the younger of the two wouldn't listen to us, all he kept saying was "he's that guy from the famous British band the Prodigy" The older policeman thought he was definitely wiser, ha ha, and said we couldn't spend the night walking the streets of Manhattan, we'd be mugged! They even suggested we go across the water to Jersey 'coz the hotels were better! Fuck off! we said. They wouldn't believe we weren't the Prodigy. Anyway the same happened in Washington. It was crazy, everywhere we went, they wanted our photos taken with their girls and ladyfriends, ha ha, mental! We spent a few days in Providence, a really nice town, and before I get started I gotta give "Babes Bar" a shout, KJ and all the staff at "Modern Primitives," oh yeah, and not forgetting Bobby Hymer at his bar...I've forgotten the name of it now though! Anyway, we went for something to eat and happened on this great Italian restaurant. Well it was filled by some real characters to say the least! Anyway, it happened again, suddenly everyone's hugging us and buying us a drink, the wives and girlfriends are all getting their photos taken with us. Old Blue Eyes is on the jukebox and every time I try to say I ain't who they think I am, they keep saying "hey, we understand, ya just want a quiet drink and some pasta, it's cool! Shit, there was some seriously serious people there, some real faces! They treated us real fine, they were the best. We were fed and watered and looked after well. They made us totally welcome. I think in the end they knew that we weren't the Prodigy ha ha, and we weren't really famous rich dudes either but they made our

couple of nights in Providence real special. Respect goes a long way and those guys deserve maximum respect! Cheers guys!

MRR: Why do you think tattoos have exploded into the mainstream?

Needs: Well, I guess tattooing has got bigger because it's more accepted and is fast becoming part of the kids' culture. More and more bands have got them, from Marilyn Manson to Blink 182 to the Spice Girls, they've all helped influence kids to get tattooed. A lot of older people too are getting inked 'coz now they don't have to worry as much about being looked down on from the establishment. But the kids have really took to it yeah. It's one way that you can get what you want and most of the artists now working are doing some amazing stuff so it's really possible to get some "one-off" stuff done to suit your own personal needs. And, hey, let's face it, it's probably one of the only things the system or government can't take off you, yeah, your money, your house, your honor, pride and dignity, they can all take, but not your tattoos, they go where you go, for keeps. Yeehaarghh!

MRR: What's the difference between Charles Bronson-the actor, Charles Bronson-the thrash band, and Charles Bronson-the prisoner?

Needs: Well, let's see. One's a crap actor ha ha, one's a damn good thrash band and one's a fuck off, stand up type of guy! It's no secret that Charlie's doing time for robbing and violence, but he's a friend and thats what matters! As my mum would say, "let those without sin cast the first stone" Charlie has written some lyrics for us over the past few years, a couple of which were put on our last CD album. He's just written another one for us called "Iceman" and should be on our next album or maybe a single. We'll have to wait and see how it goes yeah! Like I say, we've got a lot of respect for the guy and he's the same with us. The band all come from the same side of the street as Charlie, so we know where he's coming from. He hasn't really hurt anyone who didn't need a hurtin! Anyway, we're looking forward to the day he's released. "Respect" Charlie-nuff said!

MRR: the UK imprisons more people than any other European country. That's pretty fucked up.

Needs: You bet it's fucked up! The government seem to think if you just keep jailing people and ignoring the real problems in inner city housing estates that the problem will all go away. A bit like burying your head in the sand. they can't seem to see that poverty is the problem. Mind you, I think they can see it, it's just that it's easier to hide it all behind walls topped with razor wire! Jail/prison don't solve shit, it's just the systems way of losing sight of what's happening. Yeah sure, there's people who need to be dealt with, and helped, but locking them up for years on end with little or no help of any sort can't be the way. Thousands of lives ruined, everybody's a victim when it comes to crime. Our justice system is based on fear, fear of change, fear of us, you or whoever. To oppress is their only goal. To brutalize us the nation into conforming. The system don't care. The more people behind bars, the better it all looks on election day. Fuck 'em!!!

MRR: Past and present-who inspires you?

Needs: Oh shit! The list of bands and other things that inspire us is endless! Anyway, on the music side of things, we'd have to say that bands like the Exploited, Agnostic Front, Slapshot, Cro Mags, Biohazard, Assert, H2O, along with bands like GBH, Conflict, Damned, Crass, Subhumans, Discharge, UK Subs, to name a few. Really any band on the scene who have had something to say have helped to influence us. A lot of other things inspire us too, there's been friends like Paul from the States, Britt from Assert whose advice and help have brought us a long way, including a couple of promoters who gave us the chance at the beginning when we needed it most, like big Jim C and Deek, who helped even when the money was tight. We're inspired by the government daily as their stupidity and total lack of care for all except themselves and the middle classes never fails to amaze us! World events also inspire us, war, terrorism, we don't need it yeah. Life itself just inspires us really, the things that happen in our daily lives.

MRR: Will all Scottish punk bands forever live in the shadow of the Exploited?

Needs: Ha ha, well it seems that way sometimes for sure! I mean the Exploited are definitely the godfathers of punk in Scotland. They were on the streets with the rest of us in '78/79, everybody went to their gigs, they were explosive! they went from strength to strength, kinda setting the bench mark for Scottish punk bands. Mind you, we're trying to make our own shadows, yeah, we don't really owe anybody anything, but of course we're influenced by their style. Just a bit though! ha ha. I think with ourselves, people have compared us to the Exploited because of the vocal style and energy that we have. Thats cool really 'coz we come from basically the same town in Scotland and we don't sing with English or American accents like a lot of other bands do. Even some Scottish bands have done this. Each to their own, but we ain't singing, I'm shouting, usually as fast and as hard as I can! Kinda naturally! ha ha. Anyway, if the Exploited have cast a shadow hopefully we can scratch our way from under it yeah! and bring our own brand of hardcore punk rock to the masses. Yeehaaargh!!!

MRR: Final say??

Needs: Aye! The Swellbellys rule!

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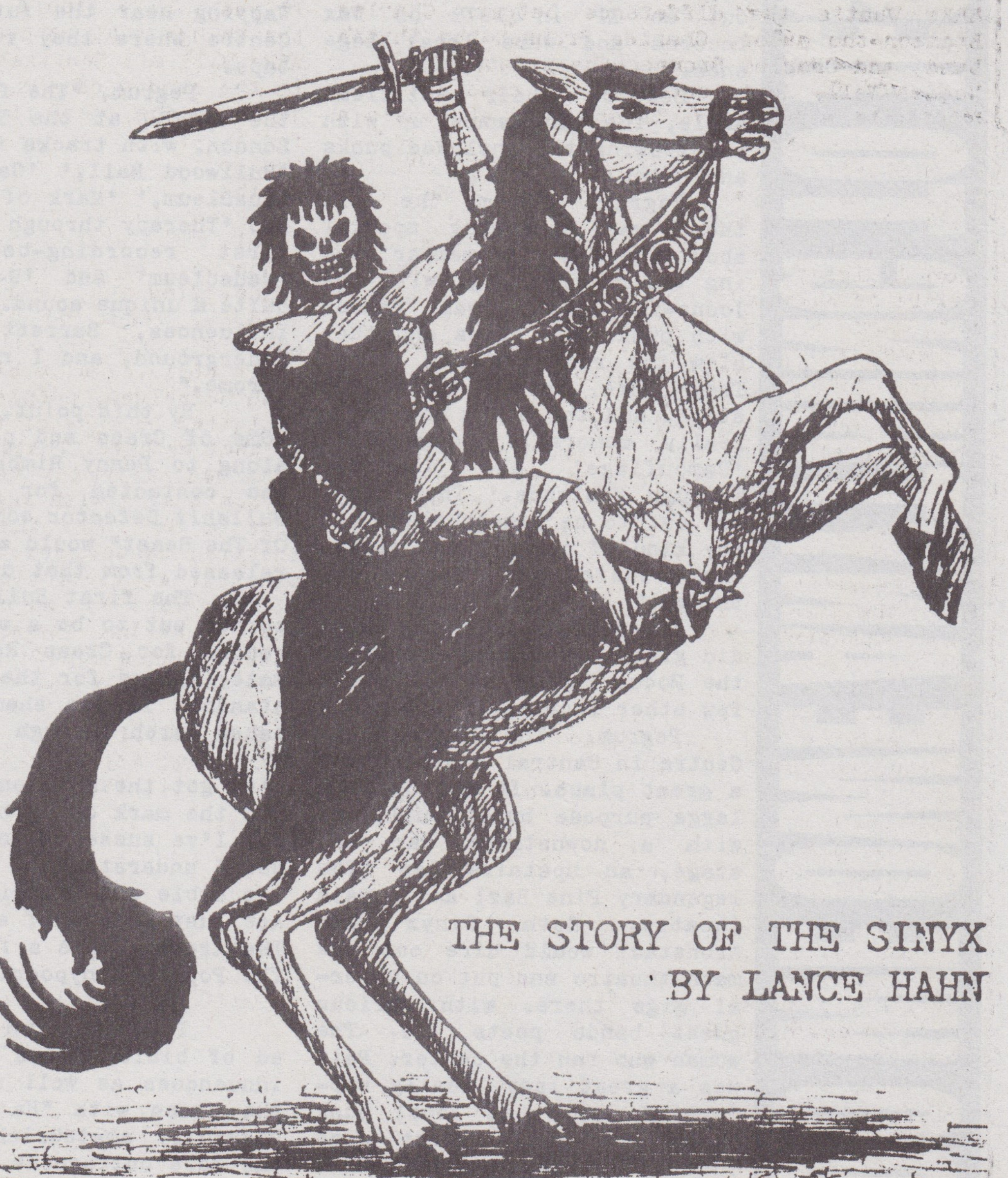
THE SINYX

"IT WAS A CONSCIOUS EFFORT TO STICK TO THE SINYX ETHOS OF BEING COMPLETELY INDEPENDENT AND DOING IT THEMSELVES." —STEVE PEGRUM, DRUMMER



THE STORY OF THE SINYX
BY LANCE HAHN

DO WE OWE ANYTHING TO JESUS? NOT A LOT!

Southend has had a history with punk bands going back to the first generation with proto-punks like Eddie And The Hotrods. Of the second generation scene, one of the most important and often forgotten bands was probably the Sinyx.

The Sinyx were formed in the Fall of 1979. Friends from school, the band was made up of Paul Barrett (also known as "Alien"), Paul Brunt, Auntie, and Vints (don't really know their real names). The name was a random selection made by Auntie. Starting with a gig at the Focus Youth Centre in 1980, the band soon developed a local following.

Steve Pegrum, "The Sinyx were the first overtly political punk band from the area. The 'first' pure punk band was The Machines in 1977, who put out an EP in 1978 on Wax records and were local legends."

Despite their political angle, the band wound up with a following the included punks and skins.

Pegrum, "From the off there was something special about the band-I remember seeing their first gig, with the Icons-the place was rammed with punks and skins and they blew the roof off the place. They were very intense on stage, and the Sinyx had these really memorable songs like 'Camouflage' and 'Therapy Through Violence.' They never set out to be pigeonholed into any kind of corner, and always took their own stance on things."

Throughout 1980 the band did gigs in the area mostly at the Focus Centre as well as a few other local punk spots.

Pegrum, "The Focus Youth Centre in Central Southend was a great place. It was quite a large purpose built building, with a downstairs bar and stage, an upstairs bar (The legendary Pine Bar) and a main theatre. Both Sinyx and Kronstadt would hire out the main theatre and put on several gigs there, with various guest bands poets etc. The woman who ran the center, Pat, was a great lady, really supportive, and most local punk bands got their first gigs there. The places didn't have a bad sound and there was always a regular punk clientele, so from 1980 to about 1986 it really was a key place to get started and play. The Pine Bar was almost exclusively punk, and was a safe haven to hang out. In London, The Sinyx would play the Pied Bull quite a lot, and in Southend the other main venue was The Grand Hotel."

With the growing interest in the band, they began to play out of Southend with other like minded bands. This turned into a lasting friendship with the Erratics and Flux of Pink Indians. This connection would help get them in touch with the Crass camp.

Pegrum, "In the early days, the Sinyx would play with the Erratics and Flux of Pink Indians out of town a lot-Sid from the Flux briefly played drums in the Sinyx. They were great double bills, as The Flux and Sinyx were coming from the same kind of place, but playing quite different stylistically, which made for great, original gigs. Around Essex the band would sometimes play with The Waxwork Dummies of The Icons."

On March 1, the band made the trek to Wapping near the future site of the Anarchy Centre where they recorded their first demo tape.

Pegrum, "The first demo was recorded on the 1/3/80 at the Elephant Studio, Wapping, London, with tracks including '9-5 Auschwitz,' 'Bullwood Hall,' 'Camouflage,' 'Britain is a Mausoleum,' 'Mark of the Beast,' 'Automaton,' and 'Therapy through Violence.' It was a great first recording-best songs on it are 'Mausoleum' and '9-5 Auschwitz.' It's got quite a unique sound. Aside from the usual punk influences, Barrett was into the Velvet Underground, and I remember Auntie being into Chrome."

By this point, Auntie had gotten to know some of Crass and passed a copy of the demo along to Penny Rimbaud. Eventually, the band was contacted for inclusion on the first *Bullshit Detector* compilation. The track "Mark Of The Beast" would end up being the only thing released from that demo.

The first *Bullshit Detector* compilation turned out to be a sampler of future bands to record for Crass Records. While that never materialized for the Sinyx, their track was a standout in its shambolic approach and fast-paced march through a blasphemous rant.

I've got the mark on my forehead
And the mark on my hand
Now I've sussed it out
Now I understand
The bible and religion
Are just a load of shit
The Archbishop's a fool
The Pope's a hypocrite

Their section of the cover art consisted of bible quotes out of context as sexual innuendoes as well as a graphic of Christ on the cross with "Ha Ha Ha" replacing "INRI". Playfully amateurish, the scrawl seemed all the more outrageous.

With the quick release of that record in 1980, the band found themselves playing more gigs and to bigger audiences.

Pegrum, "The 1980 era gigs were excellent, intense affairs-playing with the Flux a lot and helping generate a great scene."

The live performances helped to tighten up the band's set and new songs were added. Before the year was up, they had gone back into the studio to record again. On September 6, they cut four songs with Barry Martin late of the Kursaal Flyers.

Pegrum, "There were four songs on it, 'Animal,' 'Decadence,' 'Suicide,' and a reworking of 'Britain is a Mausoleum.' It was produced by Barry Martin (local guitar legend, now playing in the Hamsters). I think it was slightly overproduced, with a few unnecessary guitar effects, however, it wasn't that bad and did show the evolution of the band and Baretts rawer singing style-best track was 'Suicide'."

But despite the new recording and steady gigging, two of the Sinyx had decided to split the group before the year was over. Paul Brunt and Vints decided to leave the band with little fanfare or acrimony.

Pegrum, "I don't really know-after the Sinyx I don't remember Paul Brunt playing in any bands. Vints played in the Nihilist Corps and KMosaic for a while and I lost touch with him after that. He was a great drummer and on the local scene was quite a legend."

Simultaneously, another local punk band, The Icons, were calling it a day.

Pegrum, "The Icons were a Southend Punk Band that existed between 1979-1980 and consisted of Copper - vocals, Filf - guitar, John - bass and Peanut - drums. They were a good live band, and recorded one demo."

Nick Robinson (Filf) and John Edwards were soon asked to join the band on guitar and bass. Deciding to give a try at the previously rudimentary drumming, Auntie switched from bass and soon proved to be forceful behind the kit.

Pegrum, "After Paul Brunt and Vints left, the Icons had split up at the same time, and being friends and coming from the same musical background, it made sense to join forces. With Auntie moving to drums, it led to a new, harsher, and more powerful sound."

This new line-up was debut at the start of 1981. The change in style was greeted positively and a new direction was being forged away from the fast marches and more towards the heavier, more doom-laden sound of their later musical output. Some songs new to the set at that point were "Animal", "Fight", and "Excommunication".

Pegrum, "By 1981 when the line up changed, the gigs became, if anything more intense, and when the band would play their two key songs-'Fight' and 'The Plague', the place would erupt. Also, there were a number of great alternative venues always cropping up-unused churches etc where some great gigs were played."

By this time, the band felt they were in a position to release their own record. Wanting to work outside of the normal system of independent punk labels in Britain, they decided on a project release with long time friend, Rob of *Reality Attacks* fanzine.

Pegrum, "Rob ran the fanzine and was really into the music and ideas of the idea, and subsequently when the idea of the EP came about, it made sense to put it out in conjunction with the fanzine."

This time around, the band decided to record at home at Spectrum Studios.

Pegrum, "Spectrum studio was brilliant. It was a small studio in Westcliff, on the outskirts of Southend. It had been there for quite a while, and the engineer, Warwick Kemp, was a cool guy who had got this amazing 16 track from Decca, who'd used it in the 60s to record bands like the Rolling Stones. It got a great sound (The Kronstadt also recorded their last demo their in 1986). Sadly, under strange circumstances in the early 90s there was a fire at the studio that completely destroyed it and everything was lost, which was really tragic."

The four tracks recorded were "The Plague", "Decadence", "Zulu", and "Animal". The record was titled *Black Death*, which seemed to come from the lead track.

Pegrum, "Mainly it was Aunties and Paul's idea, so you'll have to ask them, but the key song on the EP was 'The Plague', which had the lyric 'anarchy is here-the plague of peace' and so the 'Black Death' fitted the title excellently."

The record would turn out to be a one off project for *Reality Attacks* and would be the label's only release. Despite it being on such a fly by night label, the record did still fit into the anarcho approach and more specifically with Crass.

Pegrum, "Obviously, there was a Crass connection, and they were very helpful in advising the Sinyx on the best way to put our their own independent EP, etc., and were very encouraging, but essentially the Sinyx were quite unique."

The record was released to critical and popular success even making a decent showing in the UK indie charts. But as was becoming their curse, the release of the record saw the second line-up's disintegration. With Filf deciding to leave the band, Auntie and John decided to both move to guitar for a bigger wall of sound and a new rhythm section was brought in comprising the band's final line-up.

Pegrum, "When Filf left the band, they had a rethink about the sound, and wanted to pursue the really intense wall of intense sound they'd been developing, so Andy Whiting (ex-Kippars and future Sonic Violence bass player) was brought in on bass, John Edwards switched to second guitar, Auntie switched to first guitar, Barrett carried on singing and I stepped in on drums. (I was really into that

heavy, tribal style of playing at the time that suited their songs and sound quite well)."

Steve had up until then been drumming for Kronstadt Uprising, another local band that had played many times with the Sinyx. The cross pollination would continue as at different stages Filf would play guitar for Kronstadt Uprising and Paul sang with them at a different time.

Despite the third line-up, the band still remained on course getting further and further into heavier music on the edge of what later would be the doom metal scene. Not wanting to sever all connections to the past, the band also continued with the "hits" of the earlier days.

Pegrum, "The set was quite a mixture of the old and new at this point. Whenever the band would play live, a large portion of the crowd would always want to hear some of the 'classics' like 'Britain is a Mausoleum' and '9-5 Auschwitz', which we enjoyed too, but the newer songs were becoming really strong and we would introduce more and more of them, creating quite a formidable canon of work. Newer songs like 'David's Star', 'Charles Manson/g', 'Kiss of Death' and 'Blasphemer' were especially strong."

With this set, the band played its first gig at the Forest Gate Centre on March 26, 1982 supporting the Mob and Rudimentary Peni. The band found themselves in the favor of the still developing anarcho punk scene.

Pegrum, "We played with the Mob a lot, Riot/Clone, Assassins of Hope, Rudimentary Peni, Nightmare loads really."

The band was now able to play regularly for the rest of the year highlighted by an August 1 gig with the Mob at the Centro Iberico.

Pegrum, "The gigs at this time were very special, and when the band and audience clicked in, it was a very intense and uplifting cathartic experience. We'd regularly leave the stage covered in blood from the intensity of our playing. The first gig I played with the Sinyx was in a big hall in Forest Gate, London. I think it was with the Mob and Rudimentary Peni and was a great gig. Probably the best gig was at The Centro Iberico in West London. We played with the ubiquitous Mob, amongst others, it was a great summer's day. The inside area /venue area was painted in an astounding array of colors, it was rammed with a very encouraging and up-for-it crowd, the sound was great and people tell me it was one of the best gigs they ever saw. It certainly felt great to play-I remember it was really hot, and so intense, just before the encore I had to vomit, temporarily passed out and just made it back for the encore of 'Fight'."

At this point, their set included new originals "David's Star", "Charles Manson/g", "Kiss Of Death" and their final composition, "Blasphemer". Unfortunately, no proper recordings were ever made of this last line-up to document the songs.

Pegrum, "No real demos-I think we made a 4-track reel-to-reel of a couple of songs at the rehearsal studio, but I've never heard them. There were a lot of live bootlegs I remember, which was really the best way of hearing the band at their best."

Though the band was probably at it's most cohesive, it was also on its last leg. A month after the Centro Iberico gig, the band, for all intensive purposes, was done.

Pegrum, "In late '82 after a really powerful gig with Rudimentary Peni at the Moonlight in Hampstead, London, Paul Barrett left the band, and without his voice I didn't feel it would be the same, so I left too. (I also wanted to concentrate on Kronstadt Uprising a lot as we were starting to take off at the time) Auntie, John and Andy Whiting carried on for a few more years, with Mark Bristow in the vocal limelight for a while, and with Donald on drums, but I think that line up eventually disbanded around '86, where not too long after, Auntie and Andy Whiting started up Sonic Violence."

John Edwards would eventually leave to play bass for the short-lived Allegiance To No One and Paul briefly sang with Kronstadt Uprising before quitting music all together to become a psychiatric nurse. Steve decided to focus all of his attention on Kronstadt Uprising. Auntie and Andy Whiting would carry on with Sonic Violence who would release a volley of records and have some success in the Head Of David/Godflesh vein also playing gigs with bands such as Extreme Noise Terror and Concrete Sox though never capturing the same unique quality of the Sinyx.

Pegrum, "Without Paul Barrett, it wasn't really the Sinyx, yet at the same time, Sonic Violence took that intensity of the Sinyx and took it in a different direction. The song "Blasphemer" was the last new Sinyx song I remember playing with them and was the only Sinyx song to my knowledge that Sonic Violence did. Auntie was the main Sinyx songwriter, so obviously there was that legacy and simultaneous continuum, but personally for me Paul Barrett was the voice of the Sinyx, and once he left, as I said earlier, that was the end of it for me to."

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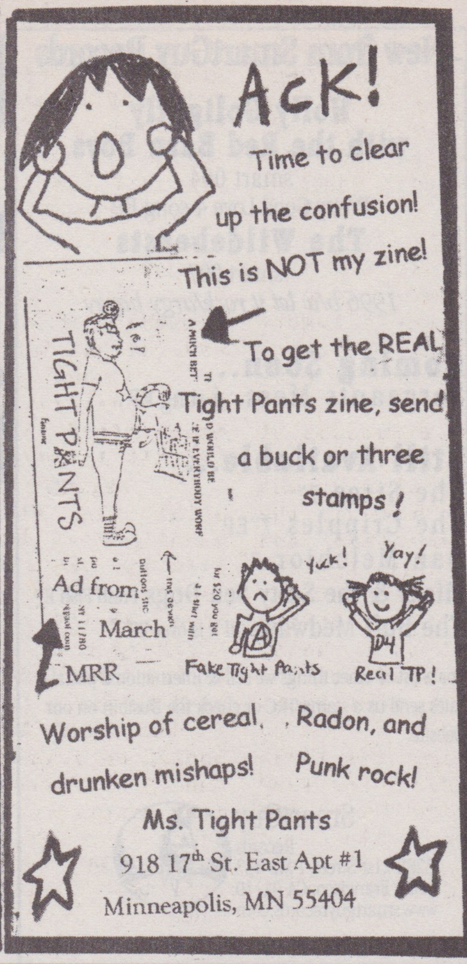
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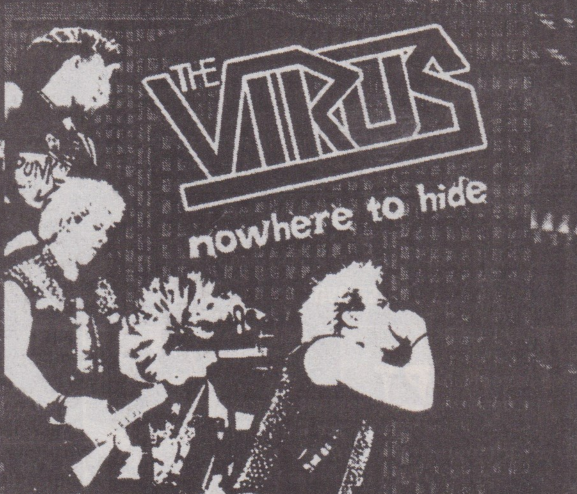

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BOOKS

Too Much Coffee Man's Amusing Musings
Shannon Wheeler
144 pages • $12.95
Dark Horse Comics • 10956 SE Main Street
Milwaukie, OR • 97222

Back in February my best friend came home from her job at an art supply recycling warehouse with a large felt hat in the shape of a coffee cup. We were about to go to a punk protest against the war and the World Economic Forum and she tried to convince me that I should wear the hat and somehow incorporate it into a lively, creative activist stance. I dutifully donned the hat and tried to think of relevant slogans. But after coming up with nothing better than "I like coffee, I like tea, I like my trade fair and I like my speech free," I decided I looked like a goofy raver kid in the hat anyway and left it in my closet, where it has remained, unworn, till this day. But even if it can't be used to single-hattedly topple capitalism, I now see a potential use for the piece of headgear next Halloween, as part of a Too Much Coffee Man costume. Who is Too Much Coffee Man, you ask? Well, he's the creation of cartoonist Shannon Wheeler, and he has a coffee cup for a head. He also has a bit of a paunch, which distends a slightly Seussian bodysuit. The bodysuit features a TMCM monogram on the front and a button flap in the rear. (Initially this sartorial detail struck me as odd—why would a character named for a wake-up drink wear something resembling sleepwear? But then I figured maybe the flap came in handy in expediting the process of undressing during moments of caffeine-induced bowel urgency.)

Too Much Coffee Man's Amusing Musings is the latest in a series of books featuring the adventures of Wheeler's overcaffeinated superhero. Though "superhero" doesn't seem exactly the right word for TMCM, who is less apt to save the day than to spend it kvetching. Much of the commentary dispensed by TMCM has the humor-in-everyday-things quality of standup monologues. A geeky lad exiting a movie theater after seeing "the best science-fiction movie ever made" incurs TMCM's wrath and gets a strong talking-to about how he has ruined the movie by raising expectations so that TMCM now "only has room for disappointment." TMCM illustrates the concept by producing a piece of pie which he serves to the kid with a flourish, claiming it will "redefine his whole concept of pie." When the kid expresses disappointment, TMCM says, "that's exactly my point! If I had prepared your experience by telling you the pie would tastes like deep-fried chicken crap, you would have been pleasantly surprised by how good the pie was." However, the kids refuses to recant his claim that he has just seen the best sci-fi film ever made. So TMCM shoots him. Now, the initial circumstance is probably familiar to you—someone raves about how great something is; you can't help but feel resentful of the set-up. But you didn't have a pie you could magically pluck out of thin air, did you? Or a gun you could shoot them with, with no grievous consequences? That's the joy of comics!

My favorite section of the book actually does not concern Too Much Coffee Man at all, though it does involve coffee. It's "The McDonald's Coffee Lawsuit," in which Wheeler gives an inside look at the case of the woman who won a suit against McDonald's after spilling overheated coffee on herself. This case has often been pooh-poohed as an example of our overly litigious society, but Wheeler shows how in fact this was a valid consumer victory—79-year-old Stella Liebeck suffered third degree burns on her genitals, legs, and buttocks, was hospitalized for eight days and immobilized for three weeks, and then was told in court by McDonald's lawyers that she was asking for too much money for her injured body parts since she was old and didn't have much use left for them. In the epilogue, Wheeler deftly pairs direct quotes with sketches of media commentators such as George Will to show the widespread misrepresentation of the facts of the case—for example, Liebeck was consistently scoffed at for holding a coffee cup between her legs while driving, when in fact she was a passenger in a car which was pulled over at the time of the incident. The larger picture becomes pretty scary when Wheeler points out that in 1995 Republicans used the anecdotal version of the story to propose limiting punitive damage awards as part of their "Contract with America." The final panel shows two children in front of a TV screen with text reading "But why would the media promote a lie? No one can say for certain. But McDonald's spends a lot of money on advertising."

Though not all of TMCM's humor is my cup of tea—or I guess I should say, coffee—with the lawsuit piece, Wheeler, like artists such as Seth Tobocman, demonstrates how comics can be a great medium for popular education, making the content engaging and accessible while enriching our understanding of current or historical events. So read the book already—just not over hot coffee and an Egg McMuffin.
—Melissa Klein

Red Alert: The Story So Far • Kid Stoker
Street Music Publishing • Apartado de Correos 804
07800 Ibiza (Baleares) Baleares • Spain
www.streetmusic-pub.com

Mark M. Brown and Street Music Publishing from Baleares, Spain have a fine paper-bound book available for you called Red Alert: The Story So Far. The first 40 pages of the book are a tour diary of RED ALERT's European tour from September 19, 1996 to October 7, 1996. This riotous tour through Germany included the highly respected veteran skinhead band KLASSE KRIMINALE, from Italy, BITTER GRIN, from Canada, and PUBLIC TOYS, from Germany. With copious amounts of

alcohol and many pranks played, the band proceeded through Hagen, Magdeburg, Leipzig, Salzgitter, Nurnberg, Homburg, Berlin, and Hamburg. Many good times were shared and the kids loved every minute of it!

The remaining 60 pages of the book contains a transcription of the RED ALERT biography tapes, many excellent photos, both historical and current, some lyrics, and a complete discography. Tony Frater and Steve Smith, on guitar and vocals respectively, relate their experiences as fourteen and fifteen year-old punks in Sunderland, England in 1977 and the formation of RED ALERT in early 1979. In the very beginning the band primarily covered CLASH and UK SUBS songs. The biography carries through the early 80s with RED ALERT in top form and the release of their debut album We've Got the Power on No Future Records in 1983. The decision to reform the band in 1990 has brought RED ALERT full circle and they are now touring consistently, receiving excellent feedback from their audience, and getting good reviews from the press. The book is very well done and is a must for fans of RED ALERT and punk rockers in general. RED ALERT is one of the true originals. They saw punk rock evolve from the likes of Charlie Harper and the UK SUBS to SHAM 69 and the COCKNEY REJECTS and participated in the growth of the first generation of Oi! bands. Order this book from Street Music Publishing at your earliest convenience—you will be favorably impressed! —Bruce Roehrs

The Holocaust Industry
Reflections on the Exploitation of Jewish Suffering
Norman G. Finkelstein
160 pages • $13.00
Verso Press • 180 Varick Street
New York, NY 10014-4606

In this provocative polemic, Norman G. Finkelstein introduces "The Holocaust" as an ideological representation of an actual historical event he refers to as the Nazi holocaust. He argues, "The Holocaust has proven to be an indispensable ideological weapon. Through its deployment, one of the world's most formidable military powers, with a horrendous human rights record, has cast itself as a 'victim' state, and the most successful ethnic group in the United States has likewise acquired victim status." This "victim state" is none other than Israel, whose lengthy decades-long record of massacres, occupations, and other violations of international law and the Geneva Conventions—instituted in the aftermath of the Nazi holocaust—are front-page news in the Middle East and Europe in the contemporary moment. Finkelstein offers in The Holocaust Industry a critical history of internal American Jewish conflicts, The Holocaust as an ideological construct, and the political implications of its emergence (in the United States in particular) in the creation of nations, states, and capital.

Finkelstein has personal and political stakes in the Nazi holocaust, and in deconstructing The Holocaust. As the author of Image and Reality of the Israel-Palestine Conflict and A Nation On Trial (with Ruth Bettina Birn), he opposes the Israeli occupation and US support of its actions and policies. Of his family members, only his father and mother survived the Nazi holocaust, and as such he is dismayed that the "the Holocaust industry," as an enterprise driven by profit and politics, has wrangled a monopoly on the historical record and popular memory and attached the Nazi holocaust to the establishment and "security" of the Israeli state. He indicts those who have hijacked the Nazi holocaust for their personal, political, and financial gain, and in a searing postscript documents the theft of Swiss compensation monies intended for victims by lobbies and corporations. (Arthur Andersen of recent Enron fame apparently received hundreds of millions, having charged sky-high auditing fees in connection with the international investigation of Swiss banks, while Finkelstein's mother received a measly $3,500.)

Like Peter Novick in *The Holocaust in American Life*, Finkelstein seeks to locate the historical emergence of The Holocaust as an ideological representation (and weapon) in the United States and to dismantle its social and material apparatus. He argues that most Jews in the postwar-United States sought to assimilate rather than appear "outside" the purview of mainstream America. For instance, in his discussion of the conservatism (and anticommunism) of American Jewish elites in the 1940s and 1950s, he notes that the American Jewish Committee endorsed the death penalty for the Rosenbergs because they weren't really Jews.

But the 1967 Arab-Israeli war "changed everything," and Israel became a proxy for US power in the Middle East. Whereas earlier associations with Israel might have conjured up the specter of "dual loyalties"—a dangerous charge during the Cold War—now Israel facilitated assimilation in the United States. "Jews now stood on the front lines defending America," Finkelstein writes, "indeed, 'Western civilization'—against the retrograde Arab hordes." It is at this moment of Israeli military triumphalism (at the expense of Palestinians) that the Holocaust industry was born, according to Finkelstein, to lend to this display of regional dominance a moral sheen.

In the following chapters Finkelstein sets out to strip this moral sheen from the production of the Holocaust as a categorically unique historical event. (And a friend of mine writing his dissertation on what he calls "comparative genocide studies" would point to other genocides—not the least being the genocide of the indigenous populations of the Americas, and later examples such as Rwanda— and the lack of empathy and reparations accorded to these other systematic massacres.) To this end, Finkelstein demystifies the sacralization of the Holocaust as the penultimate barometer of suffering and Jews as the martyr-victims of history in order to expose their political—even cynical—instrumentality. Finkelstein cites Israeli writer Boas Evron, who suggests that the Holocaust as ideological representation "is really tantamount to a deliberate breeding of paranoia...This mentality...condones in advance any inhuman treatment of non-Jews, for the prevailing mythology is that 'all people collaborated with the Nazis in the destruction of Jewry,' hence everything is permissible to Jews in their relationship to other people."

These observations cannot help but resonate in the contemporary moment, as humanitarian workers in the Palestinian refugee camp of Jenin discover mass graves, buried under tons of rubble, and other atrocities in the aftermath of the recent Israeli incursion.

Finkelstein is not alone in his drive to deconstruct the ideological production of "The Holocaust" and "Jewish suffering" as genres and commodities that generate a useful surplus of political value. Noam Chomsky and Michael Lerner are vocal Jewish intellectuals on the Left (one an atheist and the other a rabbi) who have repeatedly stated their opposition to the Israeli occupation, and to the "exploitation" of the Nazi holocaust as the justification for the displacement of millions of Palestinians. In a chapter "demystifying the Nazi Holocaust as the paramount Evil," Slavoj Zizek in his most recent collection argues

that the characterization of the Nazi holocaust as the Ultimate Evil depoliticizes historical knowledge and political relations about or around the holocaust. He targets the sentimental genre of the contemporary Holocaust comedy— including Oscar-winning Life Is Beautiful and Jacob the Liar—for its complicity in posing the "triumph of indestructible life" as pre- or postpolitical transcendence, obscuring the material and historical realities of the war. The recent "Mirroring Evil" exhibition at New York City's Jewish Museum and the theatrical release of The Believer address complicated issues of Jewish identification and disidentification with victimhood, the seductions of absolute power, and what Hannah Arendt called "the banality of evil." Hannah Arendt—another notorious Jewish intellectual—debunked the image of the demonic Nazi in her hugely controversial Eichmann in Jeruselem: A Report on the Banality of Evil, which had served to elide the historical and social conditions which gave rise to Nazi Germany at a particular moment.

Because this is a polemic, this book is a bit overwrought with sweeping generalizations and rhetorical flourishes. This would qualify as one long rant in zine terms. However, Finkelstein's argument is serious (if searing) and deserves both intellectual and political engagement. His position that we must always historicize the emergence of a discursive formation—such as the ideological representation of the Nazi holocaust—and the ways in which it produces knowledge about an object in a field of power relations is necessary and essential to any understanding of contemporary events. —Mimi Nguyen

A Terrible Thunder • Peter Hernon
284 pages
Garret County Press • 828 Royal Street #248
New Orleans, LA • 70116

A Terrible Thunder starts with the premise that Mark Essex, a young, African American man from Kansas, was a relatively normal and well liked guy before joining the Navy in the late 60s. Once he'd enlisted and graduated from boot camp, he was stationed in San Diego, where he would eventually experience extreme racial prejudice and persecution from Caucasian men of equal rank, as well as, in some cases, from higher ranking individuals.

While in the Navy, it seems that Mark Essex also came into contact with radical literature, like the Black Panther Party newspaper, and fellow African Americans who were not as concerned with getting along and or being liked by the non-minority enlisted men they were serving with in the Navy. These men were more interested in the more liberating, especially at the time, Black Nationalist philosophy being espoused by people like H. Rap Brown and Eldridge Cleaver.

A Terrible Thunder implies that the combination of these three influences that Mark Essex came into contact with after joining the Navy lead to, and perhaps was the catalyst, for what he was to do next. Mark Essex picked up a gun and almost literally did what was written in the revolutionary literature he had been reading since joining the navy (from which he was eventually honorably discharged after going AWOL)—he decided to "off some pigs."

What did he hope to achieve with this action? A speculative line of reasoning would suggest that Mark Essex believed his act to be revolutionary, as well as terrorist, and also that by taking the kind of action he did he might inspire other African Americans to do the same. If even one African American in New Orleans had been inspired to pick up a gun either during or after the good natured young man turned sniper Mark Essex climbed to the top of a Howard Johnson's and began to shoot cops and innocent bystanders alike, then we would have had an even longer read than A Terrible Thunder already provides, clocking in at nearly 300 pages.

A Terrible Thunder tries to be as objective as possible, relying on the facts and as many eyewitness accounts as possible to tell the story of Mark Essex and the events that took place on, and shortly after, New Year's Eve in 1972. This is a welcome approach in this age of sensationalistic journalism and media, but it also comes off as naive at times, and even as a subjectively written account at others, because the political and artistic environment that existed at the time when *A Terrible Thunder* was originally penned (1978) do seem to slip in between Hernon's literary cracks whenever possible.

Trying to give an idea of what kind of person Mark Essex might have appeared to be—had the reader crossed paths with the man prior to his joining, and then subsequently to his discharge from, the Navy—may appear at first to be an objective approach. But author Hernon's also decides to ignore the obvious signs of mental illness discovered in later investigations of Mark Essex, as well as the already existing personality traits that would allow someone like him to be so easily influenced by the most extreme ideas offered up in hastily published news papers and paperbacks. This seems to hint that the blame for what happened should be at least shared by the Navy, and by the racism that was preexisting in Kansas, where Mark Essex is from, and in New Orleans, where he relocated to after being discharged from the Navy—and where he waged one of the most deadly sniper assaults in history? Even with all of the meticulous detailing of every event, and the personal backstories included for certain victims and police officers, we still feel as if things aren't always explained or brought out into plain enough view. This may have been a slightly more difficult undertaking then *A Terrible Thunder* was first published, but now that it has been reprinted it just seems to be the next logical next step in this book's evolution. It's a step that was not taken for this particular printing.

The story of Mark Essex and the events that took place on and after that fateful New Year's Eve in New Orleans some thirty years ago opens the door to any number of subjects that were, around the time this book was written, forced into the American consciousness, as well as the international community's. While they still resonate with relevance and urgency today, they have been forced back under the surface where even proper discussions of such matters mostly go unheard by those who need to hear and discuss such subjects the most. *A Terrible Thunder* is definitely a good recommendation for anyone who is into later 20th century history, especially anyone with an interest in sociology or cultural anthropology. It is well written and generous with many of the facts and details pertaining to the story, but at times it feels like almost too much emphasis has been placed on squeezing that one last detail in before resuming the actual story line of *A Terrible Thunder*. It is important to remember that when presenting a story using the basic concept of cause and effect, it does make sense to get to the actual root cause rather than basing your story on a later occurring trigger event, if you really want to seem methodically well researched and objective. —Jay Unidos

MOVIES

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CAROLYN KEDDY

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Imagine pinpointing the exact moment when punk rock started. Everyone agrees that that one occasion was when it happened and no one is able to dispute it. It seems absolutely impossible. Amazingly, **Scratch** is able to claim when the first record got scratched. **Scratch** examines the development of the turntablist or DJ. I have never really considered a DJ a musician. A DJ is the person who plays records of other people's music, but a turntablist makes new music from the records. **Scratch** presents such a seamless argument even I was convinced.

GrandWizzard Theodore is credited with introducing the idea of scratching a record. He was playing records in his room, his mother came in to tell him to stop it, and he accidentally scratched. He started it all, but the inspiration for most current DJs was GrandMixer DMT who did the scratching on Herbie Hancock's "Rock It." He performed on the 1984 Grammys and all the champion turntablists of today saw it and were inspired to follow in his footsteps.

Some of the best footage is of the DJs at work in their homes, testing out new techniques. One sequence at DJ Qbert's home in Daly City, CA has four sets of two turntables arranged in a square in the middle of his kitchen. The DJs take turn trying to outdo each other and are able to see what each other is doing. They trade tips, joke, and encourage each other. The pinnacle of a developing turntablist's career is a DJ battle. This is where people go all out to show up the next DJ and be declared a champion. The DJs get very competitive, but also acknowledge that they put on fronts for the competition. In the end they are all friends and have great respect for each other. DJ Qbert is a two-time world champion and considered the most technically skilled DJ in existence. He is uncomfortable with that prestige, but loves to teach others and learn from them too.

There are so many similarities between hip hoppers in this film and punk rockers. The turntablists are cocky, creative, and believe what they do is underground. Even though hip-hop is one of the most popular forms of music these days, there is the belief that the newer DJs don't understand the art and just regurgitate what they've been taught. Sounds very similar to those forty-something punks' rantings, doesn't it? The turntablists even go diggin' (looking for records), trying to find that rare or relatively unheard break. Jazzy Jay of Soulsonic Force owns 350,000 records. The one thing that is never mentioned is selling out. Perhaps no DJ has reached that level yet, though more likely no one is concerned with that label.

Scratch is very encouraging in a lot of ways. It's great to see people using their resources and interests to create something new and interesting. They are not held back by what people think of what they do. They just do it. There is a great scene at a musical instrument convention when some of the exhibitors are complaining that the turntable demonstrations are the most popular. The accordion, guitar, and banjo dealers are convinced that a turntable will never replace a real musical instrument.

My general disdain for mainstream news is properly treated in **No Such Thing.** Taking place in a terrorist ridden New York City (now I know why this one has been shelved for so long), **No Such Thing** is the story of Beatrice, a receptionist at a news station. Her fiancé was a cameraman who disappears, along with two other crewmembers, while investigating the legend of a monster in Northern Iceland. The monster is the first to appear in the film, taking credit for the death of the film crew. He sends an audio tape to the news station detailing his exploits and Beatrice volunteers to go investigate him.

The film that follows is the quest of Beatrice from being a quiet, polite receptionist going through a personal trauma to a woman who could change history. She survives some pretty unbelievable events—a plane crash and reconstructive surgery—eventually confronting the monster. Beatrice is a strong, persistent character with nothing left to lose. Her fiancé was her only family and her job is a dead end.

No Such Thing is getting a lot of criticism for its harsh portrayal of news producer, played by Helene Mirren. This was the most realistic aspect of the film for me. How can anyone who watched the events of September 11 and the constant onslaught of so-called news not feel some disillusionment with the way anything is portrayed? I particularly remember one incident on September 11 where there was supposedly a van detained on one of the New York bridges. The newscasters kept repeating that a van carrying explosives had been stopped on the bridge. They then went to a press conference with the Mayor Giuliani and the chief of police who bluntly stated that a van was detained, but that there were no explosives. One of the reporters asked, "Why are people saying explosives were found?" The chief of police just stood there speechless, staring at the reporter, probably wishing he could just say, "because of idiots like you."

Hal Hartley, who is known for quirky, art movies wrote and directed **No Such Thing.** He attempts, and I think succeeds, in tackling some universal issues without losing his humor and oddness. He could have easily shown the monster killing a few people, but he doesn't go that way. Instead he focuses on the subtleties of Beatrice's character. She is fearless in an Ann Darrow-meets-King Kong type of way. Even Beatrice's initial meeting with monster is played out like King Kong. She gets drunk in the mainland Icelandic village across from the monster's island. After she passes out, a man takes her to the island and offers her and a few bottles of whiskey to appease the monster.

Regardless of the fantastical concept, **No Such Thing** has spoken to me in a way few films have lately. I can understand the monster's disgust with human beings and his need to drown his sorrows. Yet, Beatrice's optimism is also refreshing and makes her an extremely strong character, balancing things out.

I really enjoy documentaries, but a well-done mockumentary is even better. My housemates usually like to watch films I get sent in the mail, yet there was extra excitement for Autographhss.com. The video must have been exuding some type of vibe.

Autographhss.com is the story of a start up dot com for selling autographs. Company CEO Bob Swanson is training his vice president Kenny on aspects of the business. Stevie is their other friend who follows them around with the video camera. They hang around the Nike headquarters hoping to get autographs of some of the sports stars who have reserved parking spaces. Bob coaches Kenny on different autograph collecting techniques. When the security guard approaches, Bob isn't quick enough and doesn't come up with a good reason for them to be there. They are kicked off the property.

The scene that had my housemates and I laughing uncontrollably was when Bob takes Kenny to meet the web designer. Bob explains to Kenny the importance of the website for a dot com to Kenny. When they arrive at the designer's house, a ten-year old girl answers the door. She is the designer and is often seen rolling her eyes at Bob. There is more hilarity when her parents come home, The actors are very convincing and the idea isn't that much more far fetched than a lot of dot com ideas I've heard. The whole thing plays off as a perfect parody of the pathetic guys featured in Startup.com.

When the line between mockumentary and documentary completely blurs, we get **Get Pushy.** Pushy is the name of Madeline Minx's poptronica band. Madeline wants to be the next Madonna. She is convinced she has what it takes, supplying us with undeniable proof of her sincerity. She is convinced beyond a doubt that she can make it and will stop at nothing. She will even change to meet the needs of the mainstream. In one segment she hires a producer who adds some more dancey beats and removes any weird lyrics from her songs.

Madeline seems to document her entire life with her video camera. There is one amazing scene in her mother's car where her mother is trying

to explain to her that she is not mainstream. Pushy has a song called "24 Hour Dick Power." Her mother tries to point out the absurdity of it, while the car door is open so that warning noise is going off. David Lynch would never come up with something that brilliant.

The big question is whether this is all real or if it's one big performance. There are some scenes that must have just happened, like running into Courtney Love in the bathroom at Sundance. But could anyone really want mainstream success that bad? I'm leaning toward it being real. I'd prefer that were more people like Madeline Minx. It makes things more interesting.

For more information on these films: www.scratchmovie.com, www.autographhss.com, www.getpushy.com.

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send me a copy c/o MRR PO Box 406760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. You can also reach me by e-mail at carolynmrr@juno.com.

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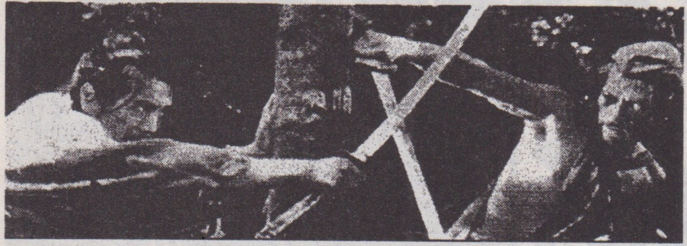

"MOMMY, WHAT HAPPENS TO RECORDS WHEN THEY DIE?"

Doug Pray, who ironically documented the commercialization of the Seattle rock scene in Hype, seems to feel he has the timing almost right for a cresting scene in his latest film, **Scratch**—a primer on hip-hop and everything it stands for.

While rock'n'roll will always owe something to its rock'n'blues roots, hip-hop is the perfect example of deconstructionist music. Bits of records are played, sped up, repeated, and sampled so as to be sometimes unrecognizable. It relies on the ultimate analog relic—the polyvinyl record—and pares it down to the minuscule portion that matters.

Concentrating mostly on San Francisco Bay Area (and making stops in New York and LA), **Scratch** isn't likely to sway unconverted rockers to the arcane glories of hip-hop, but it's a fascinating cultural documentary of a scene revving to its peak.

From GrandWizzard Theodore (who claims to have invented scratching as a kid while abusing his parents' stereo) to the dazzling stylistic amalgam of East Bay master scratcher Qbert, the tale passes through garages and record stores, but finds its soul in the driving force behind the genre—the "battle."

Battles are the thing that keeps the music evolving (at least, as much as the genre will allow). Events like the Scratchathon and the DMC (disco-mix club) finals are a breeding ground for new techniques and their dissemination. The routines, seldom longer than six minutes, may take a year to perfect, and frequently involve flipping multiple records between two turntables while micro-switching volume levels, and sometimes even throwing in a dance routine. While there's no Jimi Hendrix of deejaying just yet, the level of coordination and musicality required for the best routines is extraordinary.

The music that results can sound so foreign (even to the deejays themselves) that more than a few claim—likely fancifully, possibly not—that they perform a music aliens might enjoy. Qbert rhapsodizes on-screen how his best audience might well be creature from some other planet, and the appropriately pseudomymed producer Naut Humon agrees, sounding for all the world like a technophile possessed by analog flashbacks.

The preparatory steps to performing even have their own names. "Digging" is a technique mastered by scruffy DJ Shadow, which basically involves scouring through record stacks, often in the dusty basements of used record stores where a single classic riff might be found in the piles of reject vinyl; he claims he can drive through a town and smell the records. Choosing the riff or sound is called "picking," and often marked with white tape on the surface of the LP; it's a sight guaranteed to make a record collector weep just on principle. Many deejays prefer ordinary records right off the shelf, but now entire LPs are available with readymade picks, a development which at least one fan admits might sound the final bell of doom for scratch.

The pillars of scratch culture—which include DJ-ing, MC-ing, breakdancing, and graffiti-writing—just about come together at SF's Justice League, a kind of communion for performer and audience.

Shot on video, **Scratch** suffers from a grainy image quality and often less-than-ideal sound—not the ideal for a music documentary. But its fresh spirit of fun helps mollify the film's minor shortcomings, and scratch fans will find it essential viewing.

Presumed Guilty is a documentary with a more serious bent. When spirited fashion boutique owner Carmel Randel was murdered, witnesses pointed out Carlos Randel, who was promptly arrested and placed in SF County Jail. A product of a crowded barrio, Carlos was one of six children, still spotty in his English and unable to afford legal defense.

Then there's Lam Choi, who looks like he's barely through his teens. He's in the same jail for murdering a crime boss who'd promised to kill him. Smart and articulate, he's trying to beat a rap for a crime he acknowledges doing, but which may be more complicated than seems at first glance.

The pattern's familiar. The ones who end up in the offices of the San Francisco Public Defender are poor, non-Aryan, and often as not the victims of police corruption. While the story's hardly new, director Pamela Yates (with the distribution help of KQED public television) offers an absorbing study of local justice at its bet and worst, from both sides of the aisle.

The film's windows into courtroom procedure sustain the most drama. Whether defending a black man against trumped-up charges of drug use, or a Hispanic woman from an incredibly flimsy charge of gun possession (while surrendering the weapon to the police), Yates offers a tense look at these public dramas. If her point of view at times seems slanted, the forces working against the defendants are troublingly to their disadvantage.

Even the lawyers themselves can't escape the net—but in their case, the adversary is more political than legal. When Mayor Willie Brown installs crony Kimiko Burton into the Chief Defender position, her first order is to fire the department's most trusted and experienced litigator, Jeff Adachi. Accustomed to adversarial battles in the courtroom, he's not about to stand still for a palace coup. With the patience of a man accustomed to waiting for a jury to find in his favor, he fights the Brown political machine to win his job back.

Although **Presumed Guilty** may pass through some theaters and festivals, local syndication is your best bet to see this. It's worth seeking out.

Y Tu Mama Tambien, the new and widely acclaimed film by Mexican director Alfonso Cuaron, is admirable for all the reasons that don't matter and unappealing in all the others.

It's essentially a coming-of-age movie about two brats in their late teens. Tenoch (Diego Luna) lives in privilege, has a Harvard-bred dad, a maid, and a life that even has him brushing shoulders with the Mexican president. While his working-class pal Julio (Gael Garcia Bernal) has to make do with less, they're both left bummed and bored when their girlfriends vacation in Italy. This dubious duo, whose conversational topics run from chicks to fart jokes—who are too dense to realize their girlfriends are splitting to meet different men—find hope when they meet Luisa (Maribel Verdu, who's excellent), the wife of a struggling novelist. She's infuriated that her husband admits cheating on her. Suddenly, a beach vacation with the two boys doesn't seem a bad idea.

In a broad sense, **Y Tu Mama Tambien** is also a road movie, a genre that depends on its characters. Tanoch and Julio are loud, boring, dim-witted clods—annoying to listen to and wearisome to watch. You keep wishing they'd fall prey to a police dragnet and rot in some cockroach-ridden Mexican jail.

Y Tu Mama Tambien uses the same voice-over narration of inconsequential events that made the French film **Amelie** so trying, but it would be naive to think any part of this movie isn't carefully designed. It could been a blithe summer vacation movie, but emerges as a narrative with all sorts of subtexts. As the free-fucking trio bump and grind along Mexico's backroads, citizens are being rounded up by the cops, hand-painted road markers are passed in memoriam for the unfortunates who'd passed this road before them, and Luisa—now separated from her husband forever—is nursing her own secret pain. As the film falls together, you realize you're not so much seeming a ribald passage of youth as a sober memoriam of tragedy that's unseen. It's everywhere around the characters as they laugh and drink and drive, but like a lot of boorish tourists, they just want a beach.

The main draw of the film may very well turn out to be its well-publicized sexual explicitness. For these kids, life is all fun, like one long summer vacation, and this is the journey that will end their love affair with youth, and their trust in friendship.

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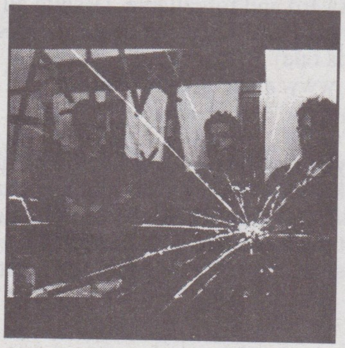
86ERS/WHISKEY & SIN - split EP

The Pacific Northwest has good beer and gloomy skies. So you basically have to choices, give in to the good beer and play fun punk rock *a la* LOPEZ (still Portland's best band despite what Mr. Thorn says) or let the despair bring you down *a la* TRAGEDY. Luckily the 86ERS and WHISKEY & SIN play the former, so all is good. I bet these bands are a blast to see live with a pint in the hand. (JF)
($4.ppd 86ers, 1434 NE 57th, Portland, OR 97213)

AERIAL M/AZUSA PLANE - split EP

I found it strange that this record even got sent to *MRR*, but was excited nonetheless since I am somewhat of a David Pajo fan. David Pajo is AERIAL M as well as PAPA M, and once was a member of CHAVEZ as well as many other projects. David's offering on this particular release is a two guitar/electronic drum instrumental. I liked this immediately. It has a SIX FINGER SATELLITE-type repetitive guitar line and steady electronic beat. I do have to say that this is probably a fan-only record though. Especially since the AZUSA PLANE side is completely garbage, waste-of-your-time noise. Packaged nicely in duct-taped cardboard with some stickers slapped on. (DT)
(Monstertruck Corp, monstertruckcorp@yahoo.com)

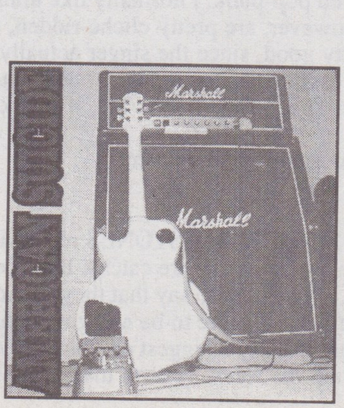


THE AFRIKA KORPS - "Music to Kill By" LP

What happens when you take the SLICKEE BOYS, GIZMOS, the LOOK, and several other vintage punk outfits? Yes, it's the long-awaited official re-release of AFRICKA KORPS' debut LP, here delivering 22 songs. (This version comes with a bonus six-song EP of out takes and live tunes). Imagine a more-aggressive GIZMOS (with occasional '60s punk tinges), and you have a good feel for the KORPS' enduring charm. (SS)
(Hate, circ.ne Gianicolense 112, 00152, Rome ITALY)

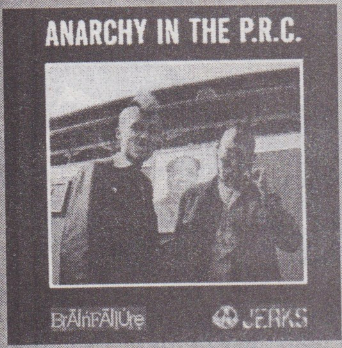
ALLERGIC TO WHORES - "The Lipstick Murders" CD

Second album from these Northeastern Ohio punks—this time around we find the ATW boys going for a cleaner, more melodic, and less threatening approach. Gone are big guitar riffs interspersed with raging hardcore which so endeared me to their first EP, and in their place we have melodic leads and drawn out HÜSKER DÜ-isms. It's pretty solid but sorta flat at the same time. It just reminds one of the the sad fate that befell fellow Ohioans the NEW BOMB TURKS when they decided to write more "mature" songs and concentrate less on sheer sonic killing power. The live set tacked onto the end of the CD displays more keenly their ripping punk ferocity. (MT)
(Sound Pollution, PO Box 17742, Covington, KY 41017)



AMERICAN SUICIDE - "Goin' Out/Killer Stare" 45

More sideburns '70s rock. Not real goddamn good. The MENS CLUB broke up a long time ago or else they'd put you to shame. Horrible production. Certainly not the kind of shit to be playing when your sound sucks. Dude, you're hollow, not heavy, and boring as hell. Go smoke drugs. (RY)
(Crusin' High Sounds, 5450 W. Sherrill Apt. 3A Pensacola, FL 32504)



ANARCHY JERKS/BRAIN FAILURE - "Anarchy in the P.R.C." split EP

Both these are street punk with anarchist leanings. BRAIN FAILURE are more melodic, have solos and lyrics in Chinese, and remind me in a way of very old pre-five-syllable-words BAD RELIGION. ANARCHY JERKS are straight up oi, but they have a distinctive influenced-by-OP IVY sound. Hopefully they won't be executed before you can buy this record. (DP)
(Broken Rekids, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146, www.brokenrekids.com)

APATIA NO/RASH - split EP

Those who know me know that I feel that APATIA NO can basically do no wrong—ferocious hardcore punk rock from Venezuela with hooks galore. Great, great great! On the flipside we have RASH from Mexico, who do not disappoint one bit in their furious hardcore assault—at times sounding similar to a less chaotic WRETCHED with a better drummer combined with *Land Speed Record*-era HÜSKER DÜ. Get this no matter what! (MT)
(Desobediencia, c/o Manuel Ramirez, PO Box 126, Seguin, TX 78156)

ARMAGEDOM - "Das Cinzas Ao Inferno..." CD

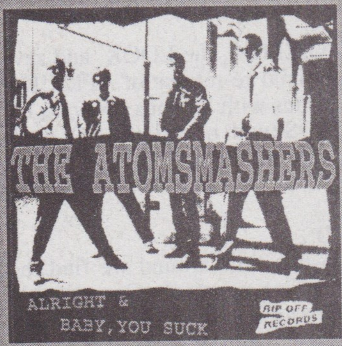
This Brazilian hardcore band who've been around for a bit crank out a full length by way of Finland. Strange, but as their doing a split LP with FORCA MACABRA from Finland some time ago adds a bit of background. Tough hardcore with some fierce guitar sound—the production adds a lot of impact. It blazes along at a good clip—the drumming can be somewhat monotonous, but not enough to seriously detract. I can't really comment on the lyrics, as they're not in English, but their liner notes, and the inclusion of an ANTI-SECT cover, hint to their overtly political nature. (TM)
($6 ppd: Mothra, c/o Otto Itkonen, Maauunintie 19F45, 01450, Vantaa, FINLAND, oitkonen@cc.joensuu.fi)

ARMY OF PONCH - "So Many You Could Never Win" LP

Maybe I'm crazy, but I think that I can just tell when a band is from Florida. That's a good thing because I tend to like a lot of bands from the state. ARMY OF PONCH has some of the intensity of TRUE NORTH and some of the emo sensibilities of TWELVE HOUR TURN. The songs are heavy but catchy and fast but with moments of calm. Well worth your listen. (PA)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, www.noidearecords.com)

THE ASSISTANT/SCARLET LETTER - split EP

What else would you expect from the ASSISTANT? This is definitely not their best stuff (the sound quality here is quite sub-par) but its good nevertheless. Spastic chaotic "screamo" hardcore, plenty of "tech" time changes and all the other usual fixings. There's some interesting loud/quiet interchange and some other head-turning moments, but nothing too spectacular to set this apart from the all the other ORCHID's of the moment. I didn't really like the SCARLET LETTER's EP a while back, but looking back on it I liked it a lot more, especially compared to these songs which seem a bit more straight forward and forgettable. Despite all that, I would recommend this record, but only if you have heard and liked the other records these bands have put out (which I think are far better than this one). (SP)
($3.50 ppd: Alone, PO Box 3019, Oswego, NY 13126, www.alonerecords.com)



ATOMSMASHERS - "Alright/Baby You Suck"

New (?) band in the Rip Off Recs stable. They sound foreign and have that "foreign band" stance on the cover. Mid- to fast-tempo punk rock with a furiously strumming guitar running through the songs. Bad attitude slurred vocals like any number of obscure pre-hardcore bands. Hearkens back to something but I can't quite put my finger on, with that lo-fi, not-quite-blowing-your-brains-out quality one can find in old obscure stuff. Pretty good, not great. (JY)
(Rip Off)

AUDIO KARATE - "Space Camp" CD

These well-groomed young lads play really layered pop-punk. I normally like things full sounding, so it was appealing to my ears. The lyrics, however, are pretty cliche-ridden, which sucks. If the lyrics on this were better, it would be pretty good, since the singer actually has a semi-interesting voice. Their later records could be awesome, but for now, I'm not quite sold yet. Fans of the GET UP KIDS, take note. Also, God is first on the thanks list, if that kind of thing matters to you. (MX)
(Kung Fu, PO Box 38009, Hollywood, CA 90038, www.kungfurecords.com)

AVOID ONE THING - CD

If anyone else besides me bought the MIGHTY MIGHTY BOSSTONES record in seventh grade, they might care that this is the bassist's side project. They are catchy, but more in a street punk way than a pop-punk way. While we're at it, I'd venture to say that they sound quite a bit like the L.E.S. STITCHES, with lyrics more about what it's like to be an aging punk on a major label making millions of dollars. Seriously, though, the guy's biggest complaint seems to be that "Saturday means nothing if you don't work during the week." I wish that was all I had

to complain about. Despite that, however, I actually caught myself enjoying this. If you're still curious, go for it. (MX)
(Side One Dummy, 6201 Sunset Blvd, Suite 211, Hollywood, CA 90028, www.sideonedummy.com)

BACK AGAINST THE WALL - "Those Fanfares of Victory" EP
A gruff cross between street-punk and tough-guy hardcore, with a touch of DISCHARGE (or maybe BROKEN BONES would be closer to the mark) thrown in. "Part-time Revolution" is straight oi right down to the dumb *"Hey everybody! I'm working class"* lyrics. Reminds me a little of BILLYCLUB or BONECRUSHER though not as good. They're from Finland. So what. (AD)
(True Brothers)

BALZAC - "Atom Age Vampires in 308" 2xLP
While the double LP description was intimidating, once I realized it was 45 rpm and two or three songs on most sides, it seemed like a strange package. Maybe the gatefold sleeve was the easiest way to deliver all of the artwork in a quality fashion. Strange record, to say the least. Some parts digital hardcore (?), some parts melodic hardcore. Despite their long-term fascination with the MISFITS, this doesn't sound like a take-off anymore—they've picked up some speed, and aren't afraid to use melody in the choruses. Also interesting that everything here was recorded and mixed in 2000. It's definitely not what I'd have expected, but it's catchy regardless, and energetic enough to be totally engaging. There are so many slight variations and flavors here, I can't imagine getting bored with this any time soon. Crazy! (TM)
(Diwphalanx, 2-3 Kanda Awajicho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, 101, JAPAN)

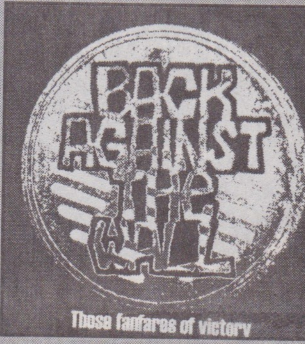
BALZAC/SOBUT - "Oldevils Legends in Blood" LP
OK, let's start with the bad part—SOBUT. If you like your punk rock overproduced and sounding like the generic "Fat Wreck" style (see STRUNG OUT and their ilk) mixed with, say, SUBLIME then you'll love these Japanese punx—I, however don't. Let's get to the part that matters—fucking BALZAC! Ripping yet melodic horror punk that will have those "whoas" stuck in your head forever. They owe as much to PEGBOY as they do to the MISFITS and I'm so fucking down with this band. Three tracks is all you get, but fuck, what great stuff. (MT)
(Phalanx, 2-3 Kanda Awajicho, Chi yoda-ku, Tokyo 101-0063, JAPAN)

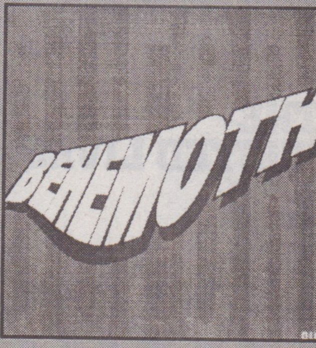
BAND FROM PLANET X - "You Should Never Have Opened That Door" CD
Three goofball Canucks go into a 4 track studio and come up with ?? Guys who probably spend way too much time watching sci-fi theater on cable, listening to the RAMONES/CRAMPS and festering thoughts of inflicting their "vision" on the world. And while the recording is undoubtedly crude and the pictures of the band are downright unglamorous, these guys seem to be pretty into it. You can tell from listening to their tunes. The stuff here is a smorgasbord of garage, surf, and old rock and roll, and it's executed with a certain style and verve despite the somewhat shabby surroundings. Clunky but still fun, you gotta love the yelping-echoed vocals. So what I'm saying is, disregard the somewhat bad-looking cover and check this out. Upbeat, energetic and (as they say on their press release) completely DIY, because the band (get this) stuffs the CDs themselves. Wow! (JY)
(Band From Planet X, 92 Avalon Pl, Kichener, Ontario, N2M 4N7, CANADA)

BATHTUB SHITTER - "One Fun" EP
When a band is called BATHTUB SHITTER, I think it is better not to dwell too long on exactly why that is. Regardless, this Japanese band belches out a couple of songs of fast and ugly grindcore that makes mincemeat of the listener. Guttural screams and a blasting tempo grabs you by the ears and won't let go. This EP consists of TERRORIZER and S.O.B. covers, a few originals, a live track and one track of spooky spoken word. (RC)
(Power It Up, Postfach 1114, 38156, Vechelde, GERMANY, www.power-it-up.de)

BEHEMOTH - "....Buford" CD
Surprisingly decent white-trash, '70s, Southern bluesy hard-rock. Songs too freakin' long as always, but somehow they don't put me to sleep. It's punk and fast enough at times to balance that heavier-than-thou shtick that gets old so fast. These guys have huge collective sack and know what to do with it. Only one complaint: lay off the fucking cow-bell already! (RY)
(Diaphragm, PO Box 10388 Columbus, OH 43201)

BEHIND ENEMY LINES - "Know Your Enemy" LP
I am easily the biggest PIST and AUS ROTTEN fan at the law firm I work for, so I was happier than a class member cashing a settlement check when the BEHIND ENEMY LINES LP, featuring members of the previously mentioned bands, didn't disappoint. With one main vocalist and a well-executed instrumental balance of grim, sweeping nuclear winter and succinct delivery this isn't the follow up to *The Rotten Agenda*. Crust sensibilities that get dragged at full speed without any bounce of the pogo attack. The lyrical style does follow in the AUS ROTTEN tradition, with huge rhyming couplet verses occasionally interrupted by a brief,

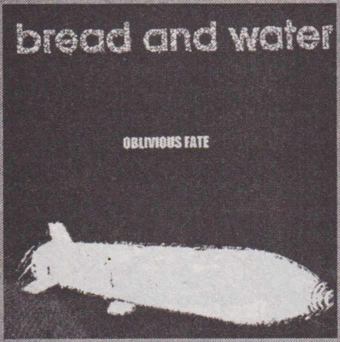




catchy chorus. All music and lyrics of BEHIND ENEMY LINES are a vehicle for detailed attacks on the agenda and results of the current Bush era, which of course are the shit swamp regardless of the president. (TH)
(Tribal War, 1951 W. Burnside #1936, Portland, OR 97209)

BENUMB/PIG DESTROYER - split CD

Fuck yeah! Two powerhouses of grind, one from the East Coast and one from the West Coast, combine for a blistering release. BENUMB blows through three songs of ear singeing mayhem. PIG DESTROYER follows closely in their footsteps with more of the same. Pummeling drums, gnarly vocals, and thrashing guitars come together creating a ferocious package. PIG DESTROYER even does a cover of the DWARVES "Fuck You Up and Get High." The whole package comes on a 3" CD that even has its own little jewel case. Some will think that this type of CD is a waste and others will think it is a novelty. I think it is just another creative way to get ten ripping tracks out into your hands. (RC)
(Robotic Empire, 12001 Aintree Lane, Reaton, VA 20191, www.roboticempire.com)



BILLY REESE PETERS/GRABASS CHARLESTONS - split LP

This is pretty fucking great. GRABASS CHARLESTONS mix in elements of all the best pop-punk, from DISCOUNT melodies to the Aaron Cometbus drumming style, all with rad gruff vocals. Also, I'm not sure if I can really articulate this, but after reading the lyrics, I really felt like I was living the songwriter's life. It might just be a fluke, but I like it. BILLY REESE PETERS has more of a straight forward rock influence, and borrow a lot of the REPLACEMENTS' drunken aesthetic. I don't like it as much, but they have their moments. This is definitely worth picking up. (MX)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604, www.noidearecords.com)

BLASTONECROSIS - "Blood of Our Foes" EP

The cover of this record has an extremely emo-looking drawing of a sad girl standing in the middle of the street, which I found odd given their very crusty name and logo. Musically, we've all heard (and ignored) bands like this before—female vocals, fast and simple drumming, a couple of drawn out intros (that sound very emo), guitar leads that sound like IRON MAIDEN outtakes, and horrible lyrics. It's not entirely awful, but it's not interesting, and by no means lives up to their slogan: "destroy everything and drink the blood of our foes." These guys should to drop their fucking devil worshiping act, and admit that they'd rather be playing along to PROMISE RING albums. (VH)
(Evil Robenchi, 1625 Grant St, Salem, OR 97303)

BLOOD SUCKING FREAKS - "Bottlesick" CD

Somebody must love these guys. Screaming vocals and lots of angst. Somehow it doesn't capture my heart. Yeah, yeah, yeah...the more they sweat, scream, and rage their punk rock brains out, the more bored I get with it. DAMNED cover, and ALICE COOPER cover, both played true to the original. Sorry, don't feel it at all. (RY)
(Sounds Of Subterrania!, PO 103662 34036 Kassel, GERMANY)

BREAD & WATER/RUSSIAN SCHOOL OF BALLET - split EP

International split. BREAD & WATER from the US play sloppy (a little too sloppy at times) aggressive hardcore with great female vocals (think a femme-fronted ECONOCHRIST). Impassioned lyrics about the pigs and the end of the world leave nothing to the imagination: "Pigs dying in the streets/Riot cops in full retreat"...yikes! RUSSIAN SCHOOL OF BALLET from Brazil play blast style with really upfront vocals that I couldn't get into at all. (TB)
(SYSTEMSUCK, PO Box 1811, Bozeman, MT, 59771)

BREATHE IN - "Nervous Breakdown" EP

This band thought it would be a great idea to rerecord BLACK FLAG's entire *Nervous Breakdown* EP, release it with the same SST artwork, and then butcher the title track. Why get this if BREATHE IN already put the same shoddy cover at the end of their LP? For the other songs maybe? Or a more important question: should Mr. Ginn sue for defamation of character? Look, I am a sucker for covers and I love the original EP. But an entire EP of covers from the same band from the same record just doesn't make sense. Especially when it's not executed well. It is a Bridge 9 limited release, so if you're looking to make a buck off Ebay... (CC)
(PO Box 8345, Berkeley, CA 94707)

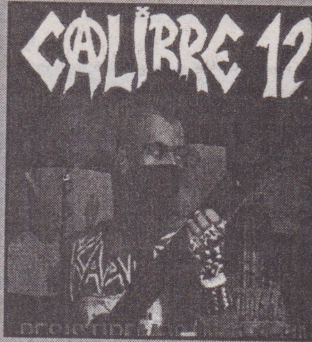
BUSTED LIVES - "One Flap Down" CD

Pretty tepid lo-fi dork rock. It just doesn't do it for me. It must be the fact that every other song is about sports, and I hate sports. Why the hell would I want to listen to songs about sports? (DP)
(Blueball, 6517 Farallon Wy, Oakland, CA 94103)

CALIBRE 12 - "Resistiremos Ate O Fim" CD

This is all in Portuguese so I'm not too sure where they are coming from, but the gun-toting mohawked punker on the cover gives you some idea. This Brazilian band play full throttle metallic punk rock with really gruff vocals. Kind of like a metal BONECRUSHER with some hardcore moments. Great production makes the sound really thick, the metal solos sucked but the rest of it was pretty darn good (even with an EXPLOITED cover). The singer has a huge Anarchy sign tattooed on his chest—punk rock. (TB)

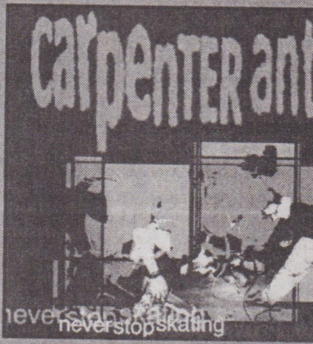
(Red Star, Caixa Postal 4861, 01061-970, Sao Paulo/SP, BRAZIL)



CARPENTER ANT - "Never Stop Skating" EP

Okay, so I am getting a skate-themed feeling from this record. The layout is God-awful. Can I capitalize God in *MRR*? I wonder what the policy is on "the Almighty" in the record review section? Hmmm, this is me trying to avoid the review. Here we go: CARPENTER ANT play a mid-paced brand of hardcore which neither sucks nor stands out. The snare drum sounds like shit, the guitarist is really getting on my nerves with his wanker metal fills (which really don't fit the music), and still the record isn't too bad. Its getting late, and I want my vegan Philly cheesesteak. Peace. (CC)

(Double Decker, 803 Saint John Street, Allentown, PA 18103)



CAUSTIC CHRIST - EP

New project by ex AUS ROTTEN/PIST/SUBMACHINE folks. As Mike Thorn might say, this is "skullcrushing." A blend of the aforementioned bands with a healthy dose of POISON IDEA. A little less politically upfront lyrically than some of these folks' past bands, but no less uncompromising musically. No bullshit hardcore by punks for punks....yes mate. (TB)

(Havoc, PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408)

CHAINSAW - "Louder Than God" CD

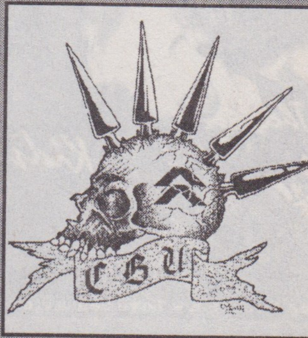
Five scorchers from these Osaka veterans. Classic Japanese galloping hardcore, complete with solos and tremendous backing vocals. The kind of music that makes you want to climb aboard a motorcycle, put on your wraparound sunglasses and ride through rush hour traffic giving everyone the finger. Fast to mid-tempo throughout, blistering guitars, a drummer who sounds like a superhuman machine, and what would a hardcore record be without a singer spitting tacks with every growl? Not as good as this, I assure you. Bonus points for their cover of the DICKS "Hope You Get Draft (sic)." (WN)

(Bloodsucker, 1-16-18-203 Kusunokicho, Nishiku, Hiroshima City, Hiroshima, JAPAN 733-0002)

CHANGE/AGREE TO DIFFER - split 2xEP

I know what you're thinking—why a split double EP, instead of each band doing an EP of their own? I have no idea. Fast Japanese thrash on both discs. CHANGE sounded pretty average to me, and AGREE TO DIFFER had good songs but I think both bands suffered from the exceptionally muddy production. I'm no fan of super-slick, polished records, but this one sounds a little underwater. Too bad. (AM)

(FFT Label, Asahi Plaza Umeda 704, 4-11 Tsuruno-cho, Kita-ku 530-0014 Osaka, JAPAN)



CIVIC MINDED 5 - "E=CM5" LP

The CIVIC MINDED 5 are from Las Vegas and sound like a cross between the WEIRD LOVEMAKERS and a band who would be on Plan-It-X or Secret Center. They're goofy, poppy, sometimes funny, and sometimes stoopid. My kind of record. (DP)

(Recess, PO Box 1666, San Pedro, CA 90733, www.recessrecords.com)

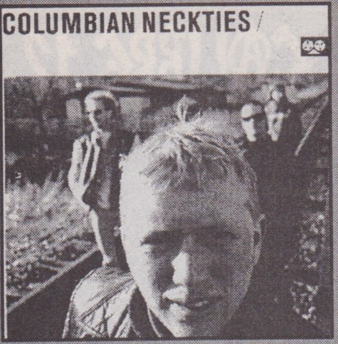
CLUSTER BOMB UNIT/RAAGG - split EP

Germany's CLUSTER BOMB UNIT rip through three songs in barely three minutes. More of the thrash/crust/hardcore (with the occasional D-beat thrown in) that they're famous for. The recording is a little thin, but the blazing riffs and NAUSEA-on-crack vocals more than make up for it. Japan's RAAGG are even more furious, although a little slower. Ripping solos and Japanese hardcore riffs...I'm in love! Ultra distorted and awesome...a must have for fans of crazed hardcore! (WN)

(Rabid Dog c/o Clay Newell 6208 McCullar, Haltom City, TX 76117)

COJOBA - "El arte de la Irreverencia" EP

Four pretty straight-forward punk songs from this Puerto Rican duo with female vocals. The songs have pretty typical lyrics regarding the police, not selling out, the television, etc. The lyrics are sung in Spanish and vocalist Taina's vocals are tough but pretty. The biggest problem with this recording is the use of a drum machine—that's right, no live drums. This makes the recording flat and I lost interest after the second song. I would be interested in hearing this band again if they got live drums, but I wouldn't recommend this particular record and I don't think I'll be listening to it again.



COLUMBIAN NECKTIES - "Abrance!" CD

I've been hearing good things about this Danish powerhouse outfit for a while, so this album didn't come as a total surprise. Thankfully for most *MRR* readers, the NECKTIES are balanced right on the very punk 'n' roll edge of the Scandinavian rock axis, calling to mind old-timers like the DEVIL DOGS and upstarts like the DIALTONES alike. The twelve raw and speedy tunes include a cover of the DICTATORS' "Stay With Me" for nostalgia kicks. The album suffers from a bit of sameness near the end, but it's a damn sight better than a lot of what passes for American rock 'n' roll these days. (JG)
(Sounds of Subterrania, P.O. Box 103662, 34036 Kassell, GERMANY)

COMMON INTEREST - "As We Decay..." EP

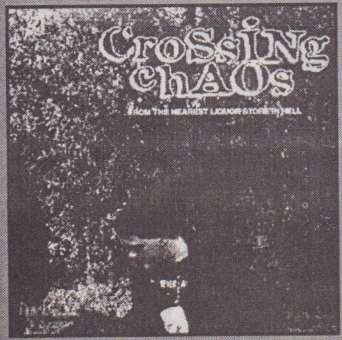
Connecticut hardcore, and that's not messin' around. First song was a blur, which lead me to think that'd be the chosen style. Whoa—curve! The second song contained elements of blur, and breaks which had no blur component at all. Multiple dimensional hardcore! Rest of the EP was consistently excellent—it was fast, but not at the expense of being original or interesting. Lyrics covered scene politics, self-motivation, identity and politics of a larger sense. Really liked the multiple vocalist action—like with the title track. Blazing stuff. (TM)
($3 ppd: Room 101, PO Box 1004, Windsor, CT 06095)

CONSTRICTED - "Struggle" EP

Third EP from CONSTRICTED, their first (I'm nearly certain) on the Revive label, which put out the fantastic ONE RIVER EP last year. The sound is slightly thinner than CONSTRICTED's *All Confusion* EP, but that hardly reduces the rich bass tone that the rhythm portion comes up with. The guitar, with vocals following closely behind, stabs in and out for the perfect hardcore corpse. I briefly thought of FORWARD, but after I got the shit out of my ears, I realized that this has none of the guitar leads and moves with extreme determination through verse and chorus to each song's conclusion. The meaty bass of each band was the culprit for comparison. I hope this makes it to as many distro boxes as the ONE RIVER EP did. (TH)
(Revive, 30 Nakajima-cho, Momoyama-cho, Fushimi-ku, Kyoto 612-8005 JAPAN)

CRIMSON SWEET - "So Electric/No Hot on Cold" 45

CRIMSON SWEET run the gamut on this, their fourth record. "So Electric" has female vocals over a trashy east coast guitar backdrop—nothing really special; but the flip approaches the trash intensity of some of your better Japanese garage trash, kicking up a haze of distortion that's really a treat. (SS)
(Slow Gold Zebra, P O Box 20506, New York, NY 10009)

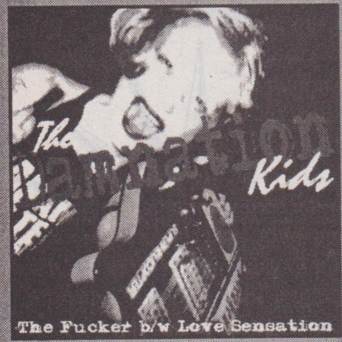


CRISPY NUTS - "I Heart Crispy Nuts" LP

Kinda cute, upbeat Japanese pop punk, with traded-off male and female vocals. This is a collection of songs (22 in all) that appeared on various comps in the past six years, plus some new ones. I'm not sure if the lyrics printed are the actual lyrics or a two-line synopsis of what each song is about, but either way, it was an entertaining read. (DP)
(Crispy Nuts, Annex Yumoto 102.1-12-17, Nukui, Nerima-Ku, Tokyo 176-0021, JAPAN, info@crispynuts-label.com)

CROSSING CHAOS - "From the Nearest Liquor Store in Hell" EP

Crust filled punk rock from a bunch of really young looking kids who are obviously influenced by bands like DISCHARGE, ANTI CIMEX, MEANWHILE, and DRILLER KILLER. (Just take a look at their shirts and patches on the record cover) This is a pretty strong release—unfortunately the vocals seemed a bit low in the mix. It says this was recorded back in 1998, so I don't know if they are even a band anymore. But if they are, they definitely have some really good releases ahead of them! Check it out. (RC)
(Resist The System, c/o Mathias Krogh, Gransjon Solbacken, 671 93 Arvika, SWEDEN)



DAMNATION KIDS - "The Fucker/Love Sensation"

Trashy punk rock that would fit on Rip Off records. Screaming rock and roll vocals, bashing drums... you know that sound. Decent for this type of stuff. Oh yeah, outta the Netherlands. (RL)
(High School Refuse, Berlageweg 12, 9731 LN Groningen, NETHERLANDS, ktvs@yahoo.com)

DANNY & THE NIGHTMARES - EP

Dark garage music with cool vox, a boy singing "stop the sun from shining!" amidst the cover of the 7" with cartoon giraffes smoking joints and superheros shouting "Eat poop butthole surfers." Recorded on a 4 track with lots of flanger, the sound is raw—sounds kinda like the 5678's, SONIC YOUTH, VIOLENT FEMMES and many other bands from the '60s that I can't name cos that's not my thing (not that I don't like it). (JT)
(Cool Beans, 3181 Mission St. #113, San Francisco, CA 94110)

DARLINGTON - "Chrysanthemum" EP

I have never really liked this band, they were always too mid-tempo and boring to me. They have tons of hooks, and their singer has a good voice... they just lack the ability to rock. There's nothing wrong with that, tons of bands get by with out rocking (the STROKES for example [not that they sound anything remotely like the STROKES...]). DARLINGTON is all the rage with the pop-punk kids which just goes to show pop-punk kids don't seem to remember how to rock. Limited to 300 copies, one sided and features and ex-QUEERS drummer. (BM)
(X, 2484 Hamner Ave, Norco, Ca. 92860)

THE DEADBEAT DADS - "Hair of the Bitch That Dogged You" CD

Crunchy guitars and driving drumming kickass in the opening tune, "Down & Out." The second song is a goofy sex tune in the WEEZER vein. Then the punk kicks back in and these DEADBEATS dwell on their womanizing and the whole deadbeat dad angle. I'm sure this'll spawn a whole angry deadbeat dad scene among the twenty-somethings. At least they'll have a good soundtrack. (HM)
(Long Beach, no address provided)

DEAD ONES - "The Busted Heads EP" EP

This is a top notch seven inch. Powerful Swedish punk hardcore here, with a thick rock sound. Most of the time, it's got the speed of thrash, but when they slow down the pace, they only get more intense—almost BLACK FLAG intense. Eight songs that switch between Swedish and English. (AM)
(Busted Heads, Box 275, 901 06 Umeå, SWEDEN)

THE DEAN MALENKOS - "Arse Capades" CD

I am puking. I am puking all over the fucking keyboard. I cannot believe that someone paid $1000 to press this CD. This is shitty melodic punk rock made three thousand times shittier by the lyrics about that might as well have been written by Howard Stern and Pat Buchanan. There are songs about sex with older women, Tori Spelling, getting kicked in the nuts, and...and there's one song praising the Christian Right, which I can't figure out if it's a joke or not. I don't care. But wait...they're "kooky". They do a CARS cover with "goofy" voices and there is a picture of one of them in a Speedo! Ha Ha Ha! Never mind, this is great. It's replacing the DORY TOURETTE & THE SKIRTHEADS CD in my player. Get this album and the VIETNOM album (reviewed in this issue) and you're set for the next year. It figures this is from SoCal. (WR)
(PO Box 10699, Glendale, CA 91209, www.aggravatedmusic.com)

THE DECAY - "Tonite EP"

This is a four-song 7" of a band from Switzerland that existed in 1984, put out without permission by a guy that found in his possession a tape of this band, years and years after it had been sitting in his room, amidst piles of other tapes collected from a past era. He spent two years searching for the members of the band to ask permission to put out a 7" but with no luck, and decided to put it out regardless. The music consists of a drum machine, keyboards, fuzz guitar in the vein of JOY DIVISION, CRASS, the NORMAL, CABARET VOLTAIRE. Catchy pop driven by electro beats and vocals that go from suave to frantic and distorted. (JT)
(SS, 1114 21 St, Sacramento, CA 95814)

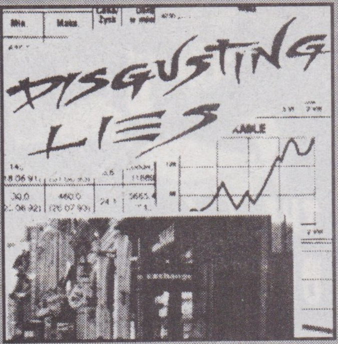
DEF CHOICE - "Don't Stop Moving" EP

DEF CHOICE, I think it's safe to say, takes their cue from a lot of the newer thrash hardcore bands that have been playing in the past few years. I'm talking about NO JUSTICE, LIFE'S HALT, WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?, TEAR IT UP, and a whole cast of others. I can hear elements of all these bands in DEF CHOICE'S sound, along with some other influences from older bands. They do a good job of it. Their songs, musically, are fairly simple and well played. Not really pushing the envelope, but having a lot of fun with it, which is so important. They have lyrics that are neither nihilistic nor totally positive. They are really consistently good lyrics, and after a song about US government, they give a shout out to BORN AGAINST, saying "Listen to BORN AGAINST, they've said it better," which is real sweet (and true most of the time). The layout on this record is fucking great. I'm afraid people will get tired of pink and black soon enough, but we're not at that point yet! There's a cool insert and all. This record reeks of a good live show. So let's see it! (WR)
(Fist Held High, PO Box 2652, Madison, WI 53701)

DISCOUNT - "Singles #1" CD

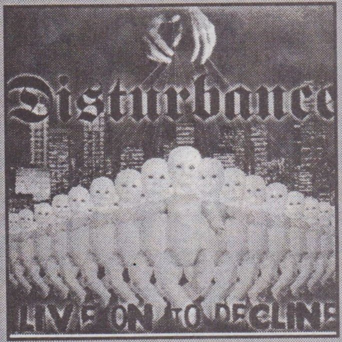
This was probably the last band that bummed me out when they broke up. A little bit of the death of new punk for me (save the "what is real punk" responses). We had the CLASH, the JAM, ADOLESCENTS, kinda JAWBREAKER, and DISCOUNT! The never-ending slow death of punk. A great mid to late '90s band fueled by friendship, spirit, and talent. A comp of their first of so many singles. Guessing by the "#1", there is one more to follow. Never the most popular band, this comp captures the development from a slightly sloppy band with a great gal

singer into an underrated and under-appreciated musical force on the pop punk front. Damn. (RL)
(New American Dream, PO Box 265, Balboa Island, CA 92662, www.newamericandream.com)



DISGUSTING LIES - "Rich Man/Poor Man" EP

Six dudes from Poland dirty up their country's reputation with seven songs packed with dual vocals and lots of changes from one boring guitar riff to another... A couple parts on this record, when they stay away from the double kick drum and the second singer (who sounds like a cheezy evil villain from a cartoon show) kick ass, but before I can finish nodding my head, they fuck it up again! It's just too metal for me... I have a hunch these guys have really expensive equipment, but can't play a single BLACK FLAG song. (VH)
(Disgusting Lies, PO Box 119, 90-980 Lodz-7, POLAND)

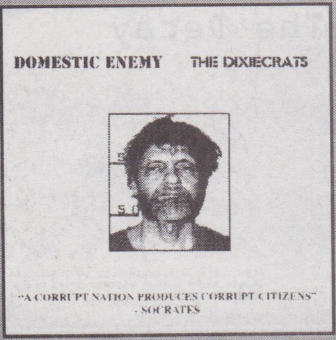


DISTURBANCE - "Live on to Decline" EP

I believe this is the first release from Holland's DISTURBANCE, not to be confused with the relatively recent DISTURBANCE from Germany. These punks sport some mid-1980s mohawk, anthem punk with good old fashioned bleak, political lyrics. Good shit. (HM)
(Tocado, Postbus 3092 3003 AB Rotterdam, NETHERLANDS, www.tocado.com)

DOC HOPPER/EL SECONDHAND - split CD

This has an original by each band, as well as a whole mess of covers. DOC HOPPER does the REPLACEMENTS, BLACK FLAG, and SLAYER, while EL SECONDHAND does ELVIS COSTELLO, BUDDY HOLLY, and two SLAYER songs. The originals really aren't that interesting, just simple, slick pop-punk with generic lyrics. I'm usually interested in covers, but here there are just too many to properly care about. If what they're trying to do by covering SLAYER is prove that they have chops, they've succeeded. Now who cares? If you're a fan of these bands, you'll treasure this as I do any nugget from my favorite bands. It's just not for me. (MX)
(ADD, PO Box 8240, Tampa, FL 33674)



DOMESTIC ENEMY/THE DIXIECRATS/CHOKING ON PROGRESS - split CD

The DIXIECRATS is a punk band from Southern California that is no longer together. DOMESTIC ENEMY and CHOKING ON PROGRESS are offshoots of the DIXIECRATS, and if I understand it correctly only CHOKING ON PROGRESS are still together. There is a write up in the CD cover that explains the history of all the bands, especially the DIXIECRATS. All the bands sound really special to the writer, especially the DIXIECRATS. Unfortunately, I get an overwhelming sense that I needed to be there to really capture what they are all about, because in the end they are just another band to me. Anyway, here is the breakdown on the bands. DIXIECRATS (old school raw thrashy punk), CHOKING ON PROGRESS (more kicking punk though the songs are longer and not as hectic) and of course DOMESTIC ENEMY (very similar to the CHOKING ON PROGRESS stuff, but with female vocals). Check it out! (RC)
(Pooshot, c/o Domestic Enemy, PO Box 12310, El Cajon, CA 92022, rantingtom@hotmail.com)

DUDMAN - "Fu Hatsu Dann Otoko" EP

FUCK!!! Fucking amazing blistering hardcore. It's not thrash, might have been called power violence a few years ago, way more brutal than fastcore...let's see, what other pigeonholes do they defy? "Hardcore for the hardcore/What's the truth of hardcore/Fight for your hardcore/You keep on fighting alone/You give a shout to the real hardcore!" (I suppose I should take this opportunity to mention that DUDMAN are Japanese). These 10 songs will positively CRUSH YOU!! Somewhere between American and Japanese hardcore, somewhere between GAUZE and CAPITALIST CASUALTIES, although they really don't sound like either. And they have the lyric of the fucking year with: "You must wipe your asshole by yourself." I have been destroyed, this record is incredible!! (WN)
(Denied A Custom c/o Yoshiyuki Takahashi, 3-5-12-106 Hashigadai, Narita-shi, Chiba 286-0037 JAPAN)

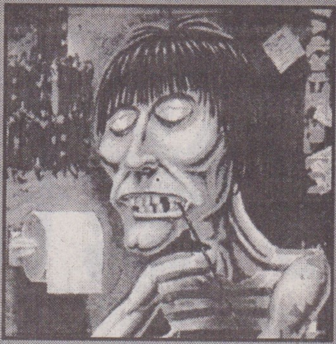
DUESENJAEGER - "Lethargie and Ausverkauf" EP

This is probably my toughest review of the month, but quite possibly the best (for me at least.) DUESENJAEGER has me thinking of a mix of mid-period HUSKER DU, LEATHERFACE, and even a bit of SOCIAL UNREST (especially with the soaring guitar licks coming melodically over the rest of the music.) Melodic, yet at the same time there is that roughness that makes me swoon. That was the first side. The second side of the record was a bit different: an instrumental (which was definitely the low point of the record), and a mid-tempo, almost march-like song that reminded me a bit of NEW MODEL ARMY. I definitely prefer the first side and would recommend purchasing this record for that side alone. (SP)
(Kindspech, Johannistorwall 34a, 49072 Osnabrueck, 0541 9338930, GERMANY kindspech@freenet.de, www.flight13.de)

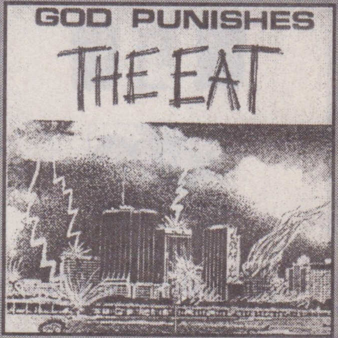
EARTH MOVEMENT - "W Sprawie Ocalenia" EP
Driving crusty stuff from Poland that sorta reminds me of a less stoner version of COUNTERBLAST, mixed with HOMOMILITIA's metallics and just a slight twist of Polish punk forefathers MOSKWA. Driving, gruff punk with a strong environmental message. Great stuff. (MT)
(Dwie Strony Medalu, PO Box 55, 58-260 Bielawa, POLAND)

EARTH TODAY/URINE SPECIMEN - split EP
URINE SPECIMEN's *Raw* EP was one of my favorites last year. Their follow-up split with EARTH TODAY just keeps the ball rolling. Once again we get fast paced Scandinavian hardcore with incredibly strong political lyrics. EARTH TODAY wouldn't be so bad if it wasn't a split URINE SPECIMEN. They play the same style but a little longer and a little slower. Short and fast kids, that is what hardcore is about. Still this record is a winner. (JF)
(United Shoebrothers c/o J. Nieminen, Poskipuronkatu 7 B 7, 74120 Lisalmi, FINLAND, unitedshoes@hotmail.com)

EAST BAY CHASERS - "Johnny is a Junky" CD
Those crafty EAST BAY CHASERS. They take riffs that I know I've heard before, and tweak them just enough so it's hard to identify them. It can drive you crazy. I've seen this band live and liked them, and this is a pretty good CD, but I am so over heroin themes in the music I listen to. I'm no straight-edger, but I just can't ever see myself buying a record with a huge painting of a deathly pale skeletal white boy shooting up. It's just gross. (DP)
(Cheetah's, PO Box 4442, Berkeley, CA 94760, www.cheetahsrecords.com)



THE EAT - "God Punishes.." EP
A bootleg of the EAT's classic 1980 EP. It seems identical, except for a couple of small differences. The pic sleeve is pink paper, rather than white heavy card stock, and the record plays at 45 rpm, rather than 33 rpm. If you do not own the original, and very few do, you might want to look for this. Quirky, mid-tempo punk rock. (KK)
(no address)



EPOXIES - CD
Reliving the mid '80s synth pop movement in all its neon-and-stripes glory, the EPOXIES (from Portland, OR) bring us their first full length. Reminiscent of KIM WILDE (the opening track totally reminds me of "Kids in America"), ADAM & THE ANTS, BOW WOW WOW, the BANGLES, and TONI BASIL...but with more of a pop punk edge to it... Picture yourself rollerskating across parking lots drinking diet coke and chasing seagulls. (JT)
(Dirtnap, PO Box 21249. Seattle, WA 98111)

EYES UPON SEPARATION - "I Hope She's Having Nightmares" CD
A noodle-rama of Guitar Center bullshit interspersed with moments of mediocre slow parts. It doesn't even sound good, the recording is terribly thin, just clicking metal bass drums and one very small step above utterly unlistenable. The only songs without pathetic lyrics about girls are the two "instrumentals." I swear, there is nothing less original in the world than, "As these rose petals peel/she loves me/she loves me not"—it transcends even punk rock generic, it's just plain stupid. I would feel bad giving EYES UPON SEPARATION a bad review, but I have a hard time imagining these guys are reading a punk 'zine—they are probably too busy sending their 8" x 10" glossy photos to major labels and dreaming of the day they'll "make it." If you find this in the bargain bin for a quarter (which is where I'm sure it will be soon enough), buy a piece of bubble gum instead—at least you can enjoy that for a minute or two. (WN)
(Uprising Communications Group, PO Box 42259, Philadelphia, PA 19104)

FORCA MACABRA - "Nos Tumulos Abertos" CD
Fuck yes! Here not only do we find the demos of everyone's favorite Brazilian-style hardcore band from Finland, but also the nearly impossible-to-find LP from 1994! Raw and punishing hardcore punk a la RATOS DE PARÃO and COLERA. Dig this thing up or just go ahead and put on the poseur cap now. Essential shit! (MT)
(Agipunk, Milani Gia piero, c.p. 63 27100 Pavia, ITALIA, agipunk@libero.it)

FORCED VENGEANCE - "Stay on the Mountain" EP
Think of DISCOUNT, if their singer smoked two packs of non-filter cigarettes every day. Then add a little of the sloppy style of pop punk East Bay bands are known for, and more or less, you get the idea of FORCED VENGEANCE—silly, fun, and simple pop punk with female vocals that bored high school kids who've just discovered the DESCENDENTS may love. However, it's going to take a lot more to excite me. "Enemy," their song about the police, doesn't once use the words "pig" or "fuck"... (VH)
(This Here, PO Box 481, Chattanooga, TN 37401)

FUDGE/TOTSUGEKI SENSYA - split EP

FUDGE, from Gunma, Japan, play three songs of energetic hardcore that sound unique and are easily distinguishable from the mess of thrash revival bands currently coming out of the US and Japan. TOTSUGEKI SENSYA surprised me with some of their harshest, most disturbing vocals I've heard in a long time, which sounds rad on top of their clean bass tone and droney guitar. This isn't one of the most notable records in the 625 catalog, but it's rad to hear two new Japanese bands that sound so raw and pissed off! (VH)
(625 Thrashcore, PO Box 432413, San Francisco, CA 94142-4313)

GRB - "1984-1989" CD

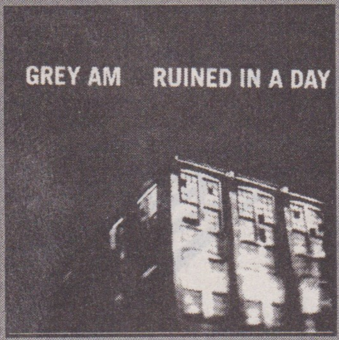
First off, without listening to the CD: *amazing* packaging, thick book-with-CD containing full lyrics and introduction in Spanish *and* English for this mid-'80s political hardcore band from España. The words "mid-'80s hardcore" strike a fear in me only equaled by "heavily influenced by LIMP BIZKIT and JETHRO TULL." All the best hardcore was usually made before 1984, but the Spanish scene was late-reacting so you have an anomaly with this here GRB: great sloppy-fast hardcore that isn't trying to sound like an industrial blender with metal licks laid on top. Eager, totally sincere and full of the things that hardcore lost (for awhile): a raw guitar sound, jumpy drumming, and garage-level production. Viva GRB! (RW)
(Tralla, Apdo. 37119, 08080 Barcelona, SPAIN, www.trallarecords.com)

GEORGE IS DEAD - "Hate Fueled" CD

Oh fuck no! I'm not having this for a second. Merely being fucked in the head and full of hate doesn't make you worth a shit with some instruments and a microphone. The MENTORS you ain't. As far as I'm concerned that shit died with GG ALLIN and EL DUCE, and if your music is just a lead up to offing yourself like they did you need to quit wasting time. (RY)
(www.georgeisdead.net)

GREEN MONSTERS - "Aiming Low" EP

At least they're telling it like it is.... Relive the glory days of early-'90s garage rock with this incredibly retarded and wonderful record. "Gravity Keeps Me Down" is the closest thing to a hit, but all four songs conjure up that golden era when SUPERCHARGER was played hourly on KFRC and the OBLIVIANS could be heard in McDonald's commercials. (JG)
(Fake, 2035 Des Erables, Montreal, Quebec, H2H 2E5, CANADA)

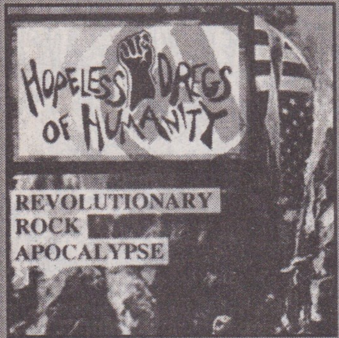


GREY AM/RUINED IN A DAY - split CD

Each band does two songs. The first GREY AM song sounds similar to HEY MERCEDES, an emo-pop song that has basic rock leanings. Their second song is more rock, I mean pretty much all rock 'n' roll with a bad attempt at rock vocal stylings. RUINED IN A DAY's first song sounds like a mix between MONSULA and any number of emo hardcore bands. The second songs goes on for nine minutes with long drawn out quiet emo parts, injections of sloppy hardcore parts and finishes with a pop influenced, octave ridden, JAWBREAKER-style ending. On the whole this is uninspiring. (PA)
(Alone, PO Box 3019, Oswego, NY 13126, alonerecords@hotmail.com)

HEART ATTACK - "The Last War 1980-'84" CD

The band featuring the guy from D GENERATION. Hey wait, I liked D GEN, and I thought they were the band with the guy from HEART ATTACK. I guess whatever pays the bills. This includes the three EPs and 13 demo tracks. Damn, on those demo tracks, these guys were 12 and 13. What's next, MAD SOCIETY, the early years? Nevertheless, a solid collection of vintage New York punk and hardcore. Although the claim of the first New York hardcore release seems open to debate timewise and soundwise. These are minor points for a welcome release for punk historians and collectors. (RL)
($12 ppd: Broken Rekids, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146, www.brokenrekids.com)



HOPELESS DREGS OF HUMANITY - "Revolutionary Rock Apocalypse" CD

This starts out with a protest sound byte and follows through with a full soundtrack for protesters by protesters. These DREGS are creative with their lyrics and themes, plus they play hard and know how to rock the rally. Includes a hidden bonus cover of BOB MARLEY'S "Redemption Song." (HM)
($8ppd: Ever Reviled, PO Box 1904, New Brunswick, NJ 08903-1904, www.everreviledrecords.com/hopelessdregs)

HOT POCKETS - "Kiss 'n' Run" LP

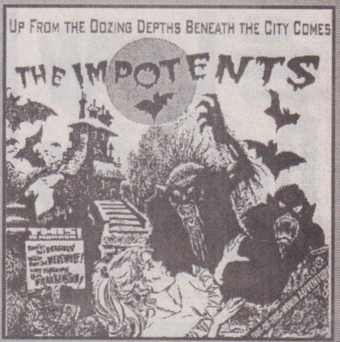
More of that Euro greaser rock 'n' roll here. Draws heavily on the early SAINTS sound. Probably would have been a little more exciting five years ago in the wave of *Gearhead* 'zine rock and the SUPERSUCKERS. Good enough, just a little late to really move me. (RL)
(Alien Snatch, Morikeweg 1, 74199 Untegruppenbach, GERMANY, www.aliensnatch.de)

I.A.F./HOW - split EP

Spanish political punk. I.A.F. delivers super intense grindcore and HOW gives us speedy hardcore that's a bit all over the place. Not my cup of tea but, it might be yours. (SR)
(Building, Apdo. 6317, 41080 Sevilla, SPAIN, building@alehop.com)

THE IMPOTENTS - "Up From the Oozing Depths Beneath the City Comes..." EP

I don't know what the blue blazes these kids (?) were trying to accomplish, but I like it, I like it! Umm...a cruder HENTCHMEN sans organ? Surfy garage gunk with petulant vocals, or...Jeez, this is a tough one. Suffice it to say that this is the true folk music of today and will probably be insufficiently appreciated. (DD)
($2 ppd: Impotents, 591 Blackmore Dr, Henderson, NV 89015)



THE JEWWS - "I Need Your Lovin, But I Don't Need You" EP

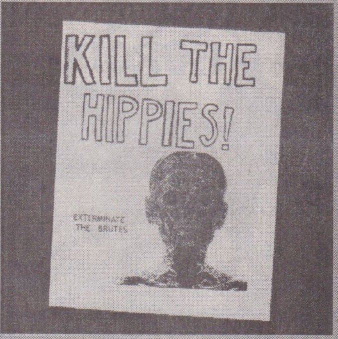
........cool name, cool lo-fi garage.....tight, like my butthole.... KINKS, TROGGS, STATICS, MUMMIES, HEADCOATS, etc.....it's all in the mix......fine looking chick bass player, yes indeed...... oh my, I just pissed in my pants.....but it felt sooooo gooood!!!!! (SW)
(Alien Snatch, Morikeweg 1, 74199 Untergruppenbach, GERMANY, www.aliensnatch.de)

JOHN WILKES BOOZE - "Whiskey and Pills/Marc Bolan Makes Me Want to Fuck" 45

What a month! Somebody hates me. Debut recording from "Southern Indiana's premier R & B band". Since this makes shit for sense, obviously we think we're funny...I disagree. Sounds something like retarded children of the PIXIES and AFGHAN WHIGS. Not exactly something I've been hoping to find in a band. (RY)
(Family Vineyard, PO Box 2161 Bloomington, IN 47402)

KERMIT'S FINGER - "Jacque's Jon Benet Bombshell!" 10"

Eleven-song EP featuring a bunch of fast, short, three-chord ditties. KERMIT'S FINGER tackles the usual fare of punk themes including drinking, trouble with the border patrol, puking on the people you hate, fighting, and of course the token Jon Benet love song. Includes a spirited version of the NERVOUS EATERS' "Shit for Brains." (HM)
(Poorest Quality, PO Box 458, Boston, MA 02129, www.kermitsfinger.net)

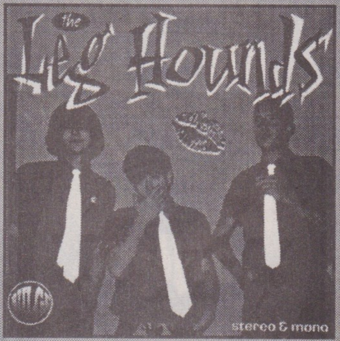


KILL THE HIPPIES - "Exterminate the Brutes" EP

Good, modern punk with the heart in the garage and the head in a beer-soaked sociology textbook. Which means they nail the raw-yet-tuneful sound and their lyrics aren't the same old girl-hatin' retread a la the last million Rip Off releases. Girl-boy vox, good fake Brit accent. You could stick one of the songs off this EP onto that *Executed At the Hangar* comp from last issue and no one would notice. What the hell...essential for garage punkers. (RW)
(Hot Sauce, PO Box 13161, Gainesville, FL 32604)

KO & THE KNOCKOUTS – LP

Pop, rock, beat, post-garage abandon. The kind of record that Sympathy surprises us with we expect it the least, but need it the most. KO & the KNOCKOUTS (gettit) are a three-piece male-male-female combo that dish out punchy power pop and rock that betrays a '60s garage influence…layered with treacly-sweet vocals from Ms. Ko herself. Pleasant, toe-tapping, head-bopping listening that retains a rough edge. I'd recommend 'em to admirers of England's BRISTOLS or RONDELLES, or anybody else who could use a few gasps of fresh air. (JH)
(Sympathy for the Record Industry)

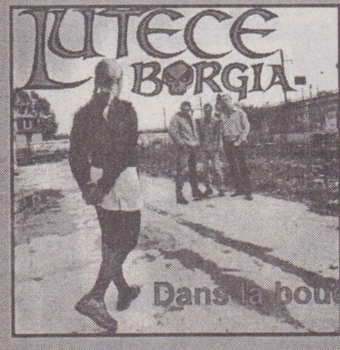


LANDMINE - "The American Dream is in Good Hands" EP&CD

The band plays fast, heavy hardcore. The machine gun drumming, hectic guitars, and dying animal vocals, and of course there are slow droning parts. The record is similar to their split with KUNG FU RICK, but a bit more crazy and a little better. The CD is a video of their last show that runs about twenty minutes. I don't have a fancy computer so I could not watch it, sorry. (PA)
(Coital Hearts, 22 W. 140 Arbor Ln, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137)

LEG HOUNDS – "Stereo & Mono" CD

The LEG HOUNDS take advantage of a CD's 70-minute capacity by sneaking both the stereo and mono versions of their album, one after another (hence, title). They leap into a auspicious and speedy beginning with the instrumental "Duelin' Diesels" before leaping into what could serve as their signature song "Rock Tonite". Now, the comparisons to New York's DEVIL DOGS that are being bandied around are more than justified: these play fast, high-calorie rock 'n' roll with lyrical subject matter ranging from the malt shop to the sock hop. Fun, lively stuff for overgrown juvenile delinquents. Listen to the mono version first. (JH)
(Bulge, PO Box 1173, Green Bay, WI 53405)



LEG HOUNDS - "Prisoner of Love" EP

Debut single from the pride of Sheboygan, Wisconsin, dishes up the kind of barebones rock 'n' roll fans of the LAZY COWGIRLS and DEVIL DOGS flip for. "Prisoner of Love" is a '50s power ballad worthy of the Fabulous Andy G., but the two songs on the backside are the ones that'll really get the kids boppin'. Only 500 numbered copies, so keep yr eyes open. (JG)
(Alien Snatch, Morikeweg 1, 7499 Untegruppenbach, GERMANY)

LET IT BURN - "Here's to Goodbyes" CD

Get stoked on the fast and furious LET IT BURN. At their best they sound like some early '80s hardcore outfit with lots of power chords. They lose me on some of their breakdowns, but overall this is a tough release that oozes mega energy. (DL)
(Coalition, Hugo De Grootstraat 25 2518 EB Den Haag, THE NETHERLANDS)

LET IT BURN/ THE SCARLET LETTER - split EP

LET IT BURN are fast-yet-catchy hardcore punk from Jersey. Their three songs are all very upbeat and groovy 'n' shit. They do SMOKEY ROBINSON's "Get Ready" and it doesn't stink. Imagine if the INTERNATIONAL NOISE CONSPIRACY had a little hair on their balls. the SCARLET LETTER (also from Jersey) are faster, more chaotic, and more political kind of like the IN/HUMANITY/GUYANAPUNCHLINE thingy. Their website is called 'tightblack-pants.com'. Both bands are pretty cool though LET IT BURN are my fave (and they can be reached at www.metrorecordings.com.) (AD)
(Vendetta)

LO-LITE "Sidekicks" LP

One of the certifiable winners in this month's sweepstakes: LO-LITE are a no-frills, lo-fidelity, high-intensity Dutch duo that play a basic brand of caveman blues: simple, immediate, and easy to grab. There's a sort of carefully-controlled chaos in their approach, never getting too loud or too flashy or too out-of-hand. Not easy to describe because it's nearly invisible: it's a kind of high-octane swamp-chug that still sounds warm and (even) reassuring. Fourteen tracks, all ace.(JH)
(Slovenly/702, PO Box 204, Reno, NV, 89504, www.702records.com)

THE LOW BUDGETS - "Philadelphia Valurock" EP

I certainly like it when a band can combine a large amount of possible styles and come out with something that doesn't sound like one big indecipherable mess. What I hear is new wave, hardcore, post-punk, cock rock, classic rock, and garage. The singer is bratty and sounds like he's impersonating someone impersonating a combination of Greg Lowery and Jello Biafra. Yeah, that's what I said. The amazing thing about mixing all of this up is that the songs are catchy and are growing on me after two listens. Cool. (CK)
(Schuylkill, PO Box 42346, Philadelphia, PA 19101)

LUTECE BORGIA - "Dans la Boue" EP

These men and women from France provide some interesting skinhead and punk music for you on their debut EP *Dans la Boue*. The first song "St K-sto" is a good anthem which the punks and skins will like a lot! The next song is "Pills" with English lyrics, pleasant harmonies, and an intriguing punk beat that shifts into a hectic guitar solo in the middle. The entire band supplies the choruses which are quite elaborate. Side two starts off with the title cut, "Dans la Boue," sung in French. This starts off medium-fast with a slow melodic break in the middle. The final song is "Lucrezia," with its intricate blend of singing and overwhelming electric guitar. The music created by LUTECE BORGIA contains accomplished singing and playing, enthusiastic punk rock spirit and complex arrangements on the songs. (BR)
(Lutece, BP 11, 92 312 Sevres, Cedex, FRANCE, www.lutece-borgia.phd.fr)

MEA CULPA - "Corporate Nation" EP

Northwest red-blooded beer-after-work vocals and lazy riffs with just a hint of twang, slightly recalling MURDER CITY DEVILS or maybe the East Bay's THREE YEARS DOWN. The lyrics avoid gimmicks, instead chronicling attacks on our psychology by the commercial media and dehumanizing schools. "Massacre High" is a gem of a song, pushing the formula with a little "Hate the Police" intensity I really appreciated. Pick this up for sure. (AC)
(Empty, PO Box 12034, Seattle, WA 98102, www.emptyrecords.com)

MEATJOY - "Between the Devil and the Deep" CD

Girl-singer fronted alt-rock band that usually plays things on the slow/mid tempo side. Songs that speed up for no apparent reason, and lyrical content taken much too seriously. They can't seem to make up their mind genre-wise. Some punkish stuff, some aggro/goth qualities, and totally ludicrous guitar solos, etc. At their best, they remind me of TEX & THE HORSEHEADS. Not at all good on any of those levels. (JY)
(All Night Riot, www.allnightriot.org)

MR. CALIFORNIA & THE BOMB SQUAD OF LOVE/14 YEAR OLD GIRLS - split EP

What we find on the MR. CALIFORNIA side of this split are eight short bursts of random noise and slogans. None of these guitar/keyboard/electronic noise tracks are "songs" and none, by my estimation, last over 30 seconds, and most don't even come close to lasting that long. My favorite track on this is "Whitney Houston," which probably will end up on many of my mix tapes from now on. Basically fun and ridiculous. The 14 YEAR OLD GIRLS side of this split doesn't hold up as much as its sister side. This band are "queer communists" by their own stating. That's cool. The subject matter of the three songs are: #1 Lenin, who in their opinion is good (OK?), #2 Lara Croft, which in their opinion is bad (who cares?), and #3 Chris Freeman of PANSY DIVISION, who they boldly state want him to "Fuck (them) in the ass!" (uh, OK, sure, whoever floats your boat, kids). Oh, and then there's the unlisted track about licking someone's "chocolatey hole" (obviously PANSY DIVISION is an influence). The music is fun lo-fi new wave but lacks anything original or grabbing enough to make me want to hear it ever again. My guess is they're probably a fun live band. This record is definitely worth checking out for the MR. CALIFORNIA side. (DT)
(Choke on a Pretzel, www.geocities.com/pirateville)

MODEY LEMON – CD

Gets off to a rough start with "Big Bang" (appropriately enough) and gets progressively rougher from there. The MODEY LEMON are, like this month's highlight LO-LITE, a two-man band that kick up enough dust for a ten men and the horses they rode in on. Incorporating vintage synths, pounding rhythms, and touches of avant noise, the MODEY LEMON are a sure sign that things can go right just as easily as wrong. There's a strained, bluesy quality to the voice not far removed from Detroit's darlings the WHITE STRIPES, but the similar doesn't extend much further than that. The concrete-raw production serves the material perfectly. (JH)
(A-F, PO Box 71266, Pittsburgh, PA 15213)

MOORAT FINGERS - "Achtung Duschbag" EP

German outfit doing full-tilt old school punk rock with the requisite goods. Reminds me of a cruder/faster LAZY COWGIRLS or ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN. Good songs for bobbing the head and blowing the eardrums, some nice rockandroll touches just like the COWGIRLS. Cool songs, loud guitars, a drunken sounding singer, etc., etc. Does the trick quite nicely for me. (JY)
(Big Neck, PO Box 8144 Reston, VA 20195)

MY REVENGE - "Both Feet Over the Line" LP

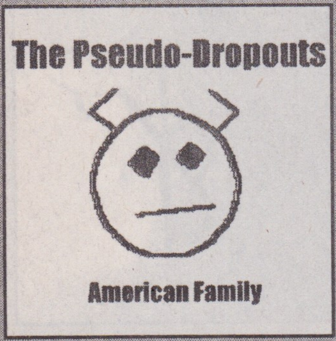
My first impression of this record was a bad one. The obligatory cartoon crowd and band drawing on the cover is ill-digested and reminds me of something that a bored 16-year-old would draw during English class. You know what I'm talking about, it's the drawing depicting an angry cartoon band on stage with an even angrier cartoon crowd. There is new twist however; this time the angry crowd (which consists of axe wielding hardcore kids and sword carrying skinheads) is inflicting death upon crying emo kids in the pit. Juvenile yes, but also very funny and fitting with the band's name. So the record goes on the turntable, and the music fucking smokes. We're talking raw and angry hardcore not unlike the first SICK OF IT ALL EP (especially the vocals). So just when I think these guys have redeemed themselves...I go ahead and read the lyrics. Much like the cover art, they are underdeveloped and generic. Specifically, the lyrics to the song "Creep Eyes" left a really bad taste in my mouth. The song appears to be about the uncontrollable urge to ogle women and ends with "We all know it, We all feel it, You know it's true." Ummm...yeah. MY REVENGE can definitely bring the mosh, but personally I need a band with more substance. (CC)
(Element, 23144 Cleveland, Dearborn, MI 48124)

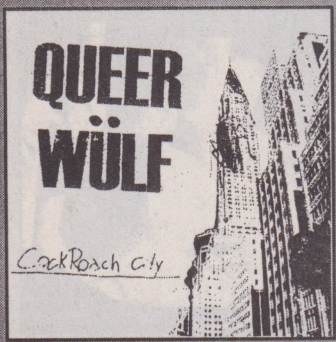
NINE SHOCKS TERROR - "Live" LP

Apparently these were sold at *every* NINE SHOCKS TERROR show on their 2002 West Coast tour excluding of course the show that I attended at the Gilman (and are now sold out). So what did you and I miss out on? This is a pretty good live recording of 7 songs from what you've come to expect from these Clevo thrashers: manic Japanese-influenced hardcore accompanied with hilarious rants from Erba. The record is clear, has a fluorescent pink design of the Muppets on fire silk-screened on one side, and plays from the inside out. Did I mention it was limited to 200? (CC)
(New World Slaughter, PO Box 771402, Lakewood, OH 44107)

NO - CD

Generally, this CD is bogged down in the (for me) tired, churning screamo style that bands with technical proficiency have been really into for the last seven or eight years. It's all prog to me. The vocal style is instantly recognizable to all sensitive band-shirt-wearing youth and the predictability of the whole thing must be reassuring to many. That said, this was never my style; I didn't like CURRENT, HEROIN, BOILERMAKER, CLIKITAT IKATOWI, or MOHINDER either, but if any of you do... (RW)
(www.nonoisetv.com)





OLD TESTAMENT/BALACLAVA - split EP

Two Czech bands showing that hardcore is alive and kicking in that part of the world. The OLD TESTAMENT are throaty choppy metallic hardcore, like some of those Equal Vision bands mixed with the damage of RORSCHACH. BALACLAVA have more of a traditional melodic straight edge sound, but are still messy, which I like. Lyrics in both English and Czech and a nice booklet with explanations make this a worthwhile release from four different labels. (TB)

(Vegan Idea, Pod Radnici 157, 564 01 Zamberk, CZECH REPUBLIC)

OVERSPILL - "Who's War?" EP

Scottish streetpunkers ranting about Viagra, drug dealers, plastic surgery and war. "Your silicon tits, although very large, compliment the fact that your brain's in your arse." Pretty darn catchy with sing along choruses. (SR)

(Intimidation, PO Box 14627-Leven, Fife, SCOTLAND KY8 2ZD, www.geocities.com/intimidationrecords)

LA PERRERA - "Romperlo Todo" EP

Spain loves the RAMONES. I love Spain for loving the RAMONES. I don't think this particular record sounds much like the RAMONES, but the influence is there. What you've got here is catchy punk rock with an eerie edge to it. Spanish can be a difficult language for punk rock, I think; it's too pleasant a language. The singer of LA PERRERA manages to overcome this, bringing a sense of desperation and urgency to the table. Recommended. (KK)

(Apto. Correos No. 1686, 20080 Donostia, Gipuzkoa, SPAIN)

PLUS ONES - "It's a Calling" CD

Probably the most well known new band in ages around here. This great pop band featuring Joel formerly of MR. T and Scotty formerly of the RECEIVERS finally gets a full-length out. Now minus Dan Panic on drums but with the addition of the drummer from Pansy Division and a second guitarist. A great power pop record with a good mix old live classics and new gems too. Throw in a bit of that old KINKS choppy riffing too. Well schooled and well performed, these pop hopefuls come on strong. (RL)

(Asian Man, PO Box 35585, Monte Sereno, CA 95030, www.asianmanrecords.com)

PRISON 11 - "Sidekicks" CD

This is pretty bland, slickly produced melodic punk rock. There is nothing particularly offensive about this, but there is nothing great about it. This band needs to take more risks in their lyrics and music in order to get any sort of reaction from me. Reminds me of maybe the poppier side of the DESCENDENTS or a fifth rate PARASITES, if they had gotten kicked in the ass by a mule or something. (WR)

(Sounds of Subterrania, Ralf Gurtler, Gießbergstraße 16, 34117 Kassel, GERMANY)

PSEUDO-DROPOUTS/SWAMP KIDS - split EP

PSEUDO-DROPOUTS are a pretty straight-forward pop-punk band from Oklahoma. Really simple approach, with no extraneous crap. I like that they don't seem too concerned with sounding slick, but I don't like that the songs are all about things that people usually find amusing for a few years, and then realize are totally inane. I can sympathize (lord knows I did it), but I just wish they'd write about something other than a dominatrix. SWAMP KIDS have a decidedly more BLINK-182 approach, with melodic leads and lyrics that at least make an effort to be interesting. The song about an ice cream-serving pedophile was also not amusing. In terms of this whole release, extra points for cutting out the bullshit, but leave your brain at the door. (MX)

(Say-Ten, www.saytenrecords.com)

PSEUDO-DROPOUTS/MY VERSION OF IT - "Unknown Members" split EP

The PSEUDO-DROPOUTS do the QUEERS/ SCREECHING WEASEL thing pretty well. Snotty pop punk that really isn't that bad... MY VERSION OF IT on the other hand come across like a stupid JAWBREAKER clone. They include live stage banter before and after every song on their side... really stupid and unwitty stage banter... The PSEUDO-DROPOUTS are clearly the winner and I would like to hear more from them... just as long as they ditch their lousy counter parts. (BM)

(Say-Ten, 700 D, NW Miami, OK 74354, wwww.saytenrecords.com, adamdropout@hotmail.com)

PUT-DOWNS – "Wrong Side of Texas" CD

I've never put much stock in book learnin', but I know better than to mess with the Lone Star State. Beaumont, Texas' PUT-DOWNS work hard, live hard, and play hard (if this CD is any indication) and inhabit a world of crashed muscle cars and emptied 40s. Tracks like "Afraid of Rock 'n' Roll", "Beer Run Baby", "88 Pontiac Grand Am" and "If Drinkin'

Don't Kill Me (Her Memory Will)" aren't going to earn them the Miss Congeniality prize, but it's still speedy Texascore can't lose for winning. *Yee-haw.* (JH)
(Mortville, PO Box 4263, Austin, TX 78765, www.geocities.com/wrongsideoftexas)

PUT-ONS - CD

I'm on the fence with these guys. On the surface they crank out some decent power pop, good catchy stuff without the token skinny ties and white dress shirts. Something that would fit on Sympathy or Munster. It's just missing that tightness and grade A material. Maybe this will grow on me, but for now I have to file this under "potential." (RL)
(Manic, PO Box 667, Huntington Beach, CA 92648)

QUATTRO STAGIONI - "Kaputt-alism" EP

I believe that the ad says "drummer is smoking mad crack." Yup. Nuts-o grinding thrash with dual vocals. Eight songs, and absolutely unrelenting; you can't even relax during the slow (relatively speaking) parts 'cause you know you're about to get pummeled, and you always do. Most amazing drums I've heard on a punk record perhaps ever, the blast beats are fucking inhuman. No lyrics, but instead, the inside is filled with political information and contacts, nice touch. (WN)
(625 Thrashcore, PO Box 423413, San Francisco, CA 94142-3413)

QUEER WÜLF - "Cockroach City" EP

Well, I had already been listening to this record for weeks before it appeared in my review pile. I am a total sucker for this shit. I will swear by anything This Here puts out (JACK PALANCE BAND, SPAWN SACS, the WÜLF plays punk rock that's about having some fun while singing about everyday issues, not things like world politics or the scene or whatever. But not emo crap at all, either. I'm talking about melodic punk rock that is a pretty sloppy, full of spirit and usually beer induced (although that's by far my least favorite part of it). I'm pretty sure someone in this band has been listening to some early '80s hardcore, too. This band ends up with an original sound because they are not afraid to try doing things a little differently. I hope this band gets the attention it deserves, because we really need bands like this in punk rock right now. Not pretentious, just good fucking punk rock and a good time. (WR)
(This Here, PO Box 48, Chattanooga, TN 37401)

REVENGE OF MONGOLOID/CHAINSAW - split CD

Strange CD. Guess it's my month to get strange releases. R.O.M. have a song where they seem to be asking Jesus for salvation—talk about starting off on a odd foot! Weird. Regardless, CHAINSAW are the standout here—their stuff is blazing hardcore in the more expected Japanese fashion. Overall, it's great stuff—while I might not understand what R.O.M. are talking about, they certainly know how to ramp up the speed! Six songs, about twelve minutes, and blazing throughout. Huge production really helps—everything here sounds awesome. (TM)
(Cry LTD, c/o 3-9-12 Amami Minami, Matsubara City, Osaka, JAPAN, 580-0033)

REV. NØRB - "Touch Me, I'm Weird!" CD

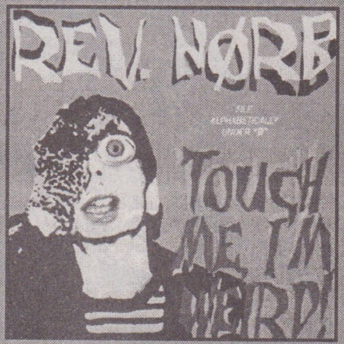
That hyper, fast talkin' NØRB has created a complete entertainment package with silly segues between goofy gimmick tunes. Taking the helm of all the instruments, including lots of keyboards, NØRB proves he's a virtuoso on many levels. This keeps reminding me of DEE DEE RAMONES' DEE DEE KING solo effort. Excellent. (HM)
(Bulge, PO Box 1173, Green Bay, WI 54305, nrevorb@greendaynet.com)

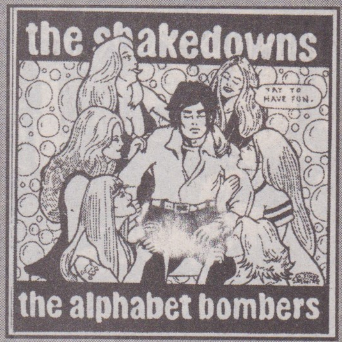
THE RIFFS - "Dead End Dream" LP

The RIFFS are one of the many talented purveyors of 1970s-style junkie rock. You can easily hear the NEW YORK DOLLS influence and there is certainly a palpable STITCHES undercurrent in many of these songs. These guys know how to play good punk rock! The reprise of "Such a Bore" from the TKO single last year is very good. When the RIFFS pick up the pace, as in "Nowhere to Go," they are really quite rocking!! "Kick Time Suicide" and "In the City" are good punk rock numbers. These last three songs would have made a fucking badass EP! Overall, the *Dead End Dream* LP is okay, but you might find yourself skipping some songs to play the strongest numbers. (BR)
(TKO, 3126 W. Cary St. #303, Richmond, VA 23221, www.tkorecords.com)

THE ROCK STARS OF LOVE - "Best 3 Out Of 2" LP

Reissue of their 1988 LP brings a flood of late '80s art rock back to me. Lo-fi primitive electronic beats with meaningful lyrics coming straight from the BAUHAUS school of rock. I would automatically assume it was goth, but "Gothic Romance" is very tongue in cheek and very funny. "Hydrogen Peroxide Beer" is pretty fun too. There's an awful '80s new wave revival going on right now. I've seen some bands who should pick up this record. It's much better than that JOSIE COTTON record you've been listening to. (CK)
(Hobart Arms, PO Box 8104, Bellflower, CA 90706)





SATURDAY NIGHT KIDS - "Total Knockout!" CD

First off the vocals are mixed low in contrast to the music, that really bugs me. The signer's got a decent voice but it's a bit of a strain to hear him at times. Thirteen songs in the QUEERS vein, worth rocking out to between DARLINGTON and QUEERS marathons. Cliffy from the HUNTINGTONS produced it and I won't even hold that against them. (BM)
(She's Gone, PO Box 995, Denton, TX 76202, www.shesgonerecords.net)

SCARVER'S CALLING - "Killed" EP

Bloody murdercore from Akron, OH. Metallic hard/blastcore with harsh growling vocals. There are song titles like "The Need to Kill," "Hiding the Body," "When I Hear This Music (I Want To Fuckin' Kill You)." Unfortunately there were no lyrics to back up these titles. Something tells me that these guys watch too many horror movies and are avid readers of *Fangoria* magazine. (RC)
(Scarver's Calling, 275 South Balch St, Akron, OH 44302)

SELFISH - "Burning Sensation" LP

Abso-fucking-lutely brilliant! Total fucking DEATHSIDE worship without a single ripping melodic lead out of place. Fucking right on! Another record to add onto your "I better own this or maintain my total-fucking-poseur status" list. Crushing vocals, thick guitars—for fuck's sake, it doesn't get any better than this. (MT)
(Witchhunt c/o Ebullition, PO Box 680, Goleta, CA 93116)

SHAKEDOWNS/ALPHABET BOMBERS - split EP

SHAKEDOWNS: lumpy, megaphone-vox rawk plodders with influences pinned to their amps. Average. ALPHABET BOMBERS take a trad sound and try to whip up some frenzy. I'm standing by the bar, nodding politely. Both bands slog thru an instrumental. My drachmas are on the A-BOMBERS to do something better in the future. Prove me wrong 'DOWNERS, prove me wrong... (RW)
(Colonial, no address, www.shakedowns.com, www.alphabetbombers.com)

SHORT ROUND - "Language" CD

You might be interested to know that this band contains former and current members of QUEST FOR QUINTANA ROO, the CHINKEES, and SPISHAK. Now forget about all those bands because they have nothing to do with what this sounds like. It definitely fits well into the canon of Asian Man pop-punk, but with a prominent ska influence. They are by no means a ska-punk band, but some of the elements are there, sort of like AMERICAN STEEL's second record. This is quite a bit better than their first EP, and the lyrics can actually be quite clever at times, but it suffers from some poor judgment in the studio. Obvious vocal enhancement (i.e. tuning programs), and a really awkward mix. If you're familiar with James Leste's drumming, you know that he deserves more prominence in the mix than this. I do like it, though. (MX)
(Asian Man)

SIDESIXTYSEVEN - "More Stitches Than Riches" CD

Very Southern Californian sounding melodic hardcore from Vancouver BC. Sounds a lot like PENNYWISE, *a lot*. I used to like stuff like this, then I got sick of it as everyone did it. (AD)
(Bad Idea)

SIVIILIMURHA - "Tolkuton Tuho" EP

Lo-fi Finnish thrash that fans of MOB 47 will eat like it's candy. Over the top vocals that fit in just fine with the ultra-raw recording, and 14 songs on this slab. There's two slower tunes that would've sounded good with a decent recording, but the fast ones are perfect just the way they are. Thrash thrash thrash. (WN)
(Hostile Regression, PO Box 37, 55801 Imatra, FINLAND)

SKELETT - "Shut Your Piehole" LP

SKELETT are some nordic dudes who kick out midtempo rocky rolly numbers that rest easy enough on the ears, but just don't stick to yo' ribs. The vocals seem too flat and the recording totally lacks energy. Yeah, this is pretty boring. (DL)
(Gigbag)

SKINT - "Alive and Kicking in Dublin" CD

Third LP by these longstanding Irish oi! boys. I like these fellas' other discs, 'cos their brand of oi! is fast and punchy. The live show recorded sounds like it was a beer-soaked riot and the band play great, but I'm just not a fan of live records and this is no exception. The recording is a little too thin to hold my attention, and they butcher "At the Edge" by SLF. I'll stick to the studio recordings. (TB)
(Combat Rock, 7 Rue Du Paquis, 57950 Montigny-Les-Metz, FRANCE)

SMALLTOWN - "Fall Into Line" EP

This is great stuff here! Total mixture of clean-yet-slashing NEWTOWN NEUROTICS guitar attack with vocals very reminiscent of those Minneapolis darlings the STRIKE. Definitely something to look out for in the old distro boxes. Excellent! (MT)
(Bridge, Box 1903, 58118, Linkoping, SWEDEN)

SOLEDAD BROTHERS - "Steal Your Soul and Dare Your Spirit to Move" LP

Was keen to check this out—haven't listened to anything new on Estrus in a while (years?), but I've always had a lot of respect for the label, and their obvious quality control. This was interesting for a number of reasons—it seemed on/off more than I'd expect—the first song was mellow and left me wondering if it'd pick up at all, the second song was more energetic, but had an overwhelming '60s feel. By the time I got to "Break Em On Down (Part 1)," I realized that it'd be hopeless to describe this in a typical "Sounds like..." *MRR* review. To sum it up—equal parts energetic, somber and moody garage punk with a psych feel. Good, but not something I'd be able to describe (accurately) in ten words or less! (TM)
(Estrus, PO Box 2125, Bellingham, WA 98227)

SONS OF CYRUS - "A Lonesome Boy/Fate"

......whoa, these boys from Sweden are funny indeed!!!!!.....they look so good but sound so....... generic...!! ...watch out boys and girls, all the '70s hard rock you hated in your youth has returned full force.....and it's pouring out of Sweden..... (SW)
(BBC, PO Box 6170, SE-102 33 Stockholm, SWEDEN, http://bigbrothelrecords.cjb.net)

STAND AGAINST - "Recondition" EP

Dark crusty grind from Australia with deep throaty vocals and hopeless lyrics. Average at best. (RC)
(Chaotic Thoughts, c/o Danny Sano, 14 Rosedale, Rd. Gordon, N.S.W. 2072 AUSTRALIA, chaosdk@bigfoot.com)

STOMPEDE - "Jo Anny Ta" EP

Badman is as close to perfect label as you are likely to find; awesome bands, great looking covers, and the nerd in all of us loves to slide the record out and see that swirled vinyl, admit it. Any fan of ripping fast hardcore can be rest assured that if you see the star-behind-the-skull logo and the Czech Republic address, then you should purchase immediately. STOMPEDE is no different, fast and furious, quality hardcore. There's one joke song on here, "Drunk 48," (wait, there's nothing funny about being loaded for two straight days, that's a serious commitment), that I could have lived without, but the other four tunes are Grade-A Japanese hardcore, that falls somewhere in between traditional bands and newer kids like LIE or EXCLAIM (nowhere near as distorted as the latter). Awesome stuff, and Pushead art, too. (WN)
(Badman c/o Martin Cesky, Nebrehovice 7, 386601 Strakonice, CZECH REPUBLIC)

STRESS - "Cure the Disease" EP

Hardcore from Dublin clothed in a black and white sleeve with political graphics, so I was hoping for something solid. This didn't disappoint—bedrock production, nutty guitar gymnastics (not wanking, but...y'know...trimmings!) and a POISON IDEA styled vocalist (gruff and hoarse). The lyrics are political, without being trite or formula. I really appreciate things that you have to work a bit to understand—their message carries better when there's some depth to it! Excellent. (TM)
(SLTA , 11 Sarto Road, Sutton, Dublin 13, IRELAND)

STRUNG OUT - "An American Paradox" CD

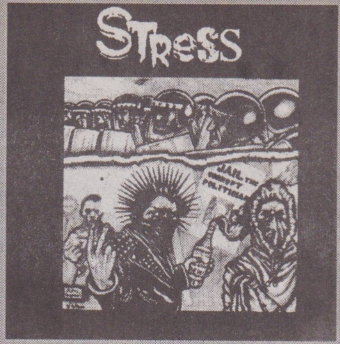
I could go on for a really long time about this band, but I'll keep it brief. Excessive riffing, excessive wanking, excessively glossy artwork, featuring pictures that make the band look like a fucking rap-metal band. Seriously, though, if you want an idea of this, picture rap-metal dudes playing skate punk, or skate punk dudes playing rap-metal. Barked breakdowns alongside sugary harmonies, "flanger" riffs alongside bad melodic leads, all with drums that sound like someone tapping their fingers on a desk. Enough already. (MX)
(Fat, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119, www.strung-out.com)

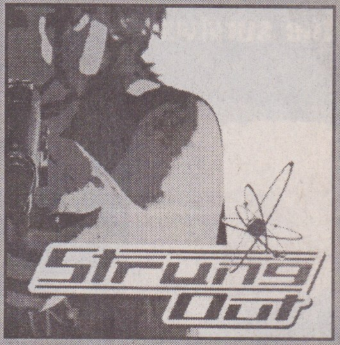
SUBMERGE - "In Gold We Crush" EP

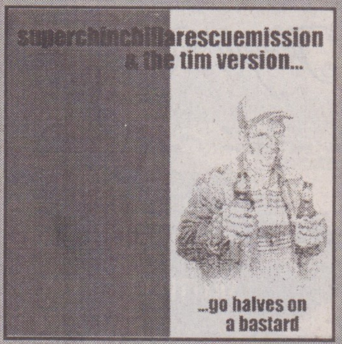
It seems like there are a bunch of bands with a similar sound as this coming out of France these days. Very metallic, fast, straight ahead hardcore. The DISCHARGE homage on the label art definitely says something about the band's influences. The guitars are tuned down and the vocals are pretty much all low to mid range. Very good quality stuff here. The lyrics are printed in English and are intelligent and heavily political. Solid release. (SP)
(Shogun, 39, Rue du Mont D'Arene, F-51100 Reims, FRANCE, perso.wanadoo.fr/burn-out)

SUBMIT? - "National Guard" CD

I've just never been into this band at all. Its really noisy and just fuckin' extremely difficult to listen too. Horrible triple vocals ranting political lyrics over tons of feedback and some



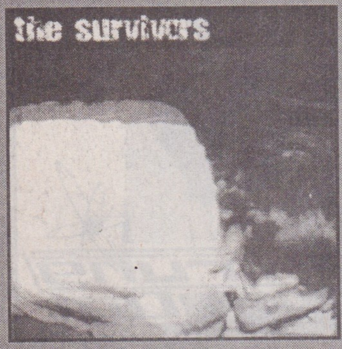




weird electronic sounds. Just unappealing. (SR)
(Systemsuck, PO Box 1811, Bozeman, MT 59771, Systemsuck@antisocial.com)

SUICIDE FILE - "The Purple Dawn" EP

I am not going to lie. I wanted another NO REPLY. Anybody that was a big fan of NO REPLY's brand of simple, raw and fast hardcore will know that the singer Dave moved back to Boston and started the SUICIDE FILE. So let the comparisons begin: They play a more mid-paced and rocking style of hardcore than his old LA band did, but it's done very well. The production is a lot thicker on the vocals, and Dave's voice has definitely matured since the days when he screamed about "wanting your guts." Still, the sarcasm and directness in his lyrics hasn't changed, which is what attracted me to NO REPLY's no-frills approach in the first place. His angry attacks on the fashion elite and name-dropping scenesters (things that seem to be prevalent in Boston today), are right on. So yeah, he's still fucking pissed. (CC)
(Indecision, PO Box 5781 Huntington Beach, CA 92615)



SUPER CHINCHILLA RESCUE MISSION/THE TIM VERSION - "...Go Halves On a Bastard" split CD

The CHINCHILLANS tear through four fast, intense emo tunes with those full-blown screaming vocals. The TIMs also dish up the emo music. Both bands have well-crafted songs with poetic and insightful lyrics. I can't figure why there's only nine songs on this CD. Keeping it real on the emo front. (HM)
(Attention Deficit Disorder, PO Box 8240, Tampa FL 33674, www.superchinchilla.com)

SUPERHELICOPTER LTD. - "My Soul" EP

I'm sure I don't have to say it again, but what the fuck, I LOVE this band. After the absolutely shitty day I've had today, I am so glad to see this record in my box. Thank you Yakisakana Records. Now for the bad news. Someone told me, but I didn't want to believe it. These are the last recordings from my favorite band of the 21st century. Ugh, what a terrible day this is. Four fantastically low level, distorted, fuzzed out, bluesy rock and roll tunes pounding through was is left of my brain. Headache be damned! Ultra limited edition pressing of 600 with three different silkscreen covers, one for each band member. You do the math. All is not lost though as this month also brings the reformation of the band into DAMNATION KIDS. One more time, this is fantastic. (CK)
(Yakisakana, c/o Prat Ronan, 51 Rue Pierre Renaudel, 76100 Rouen, France, yakisakana.re@wanadoo.fr)

THE SURVIVORS - "Death Cures Addiction" CD

New release from these Jersey edgers… hardcore that is most certainly punk with nods to both the PIST and SEVEN SECONDS (maybe it's just the whoas). Good stuff, methinks—though I do wonder if it is a requirement that all NJ bands have a song called "Where Did We Go Wrong?" Would enjoy this more and listen to it more often if it was on vinyl (hint! hint! c'mon kids!) (MT)
(Knife Or Death, 805 Adele St, Northfield, NJ 08225)

TANKA RAY - "And So I Abide" CD

This Kansas City oi! band have the usual oi! fare, with songs about standing up to folks, being a hooligan, and having a "crew" (I'm interested to know how big a "crew" you can have in Kansas City). So, I was expecting this to suck, but it fucking *rules*!! Super catchy and well-played with beefy backups. It kinda reminds of the BURDENS with elements of THOSE UNKNOWN. What really makes this are the vocals—the singer has a great voice, powerful but he actually sings. This really is one of the best oi! records I've heard in years- awesome!! (TB)
(Cosa Nostra, 291 Redwood Road, Mansfield, OH 44907)

TEENAGE REJECTS - "Teenage Trash, Vol. 2" EP

Oh, Wisconsin, you never let me down. The TEENAGE REJECTS deliver six fast and catchy songs, ranging from 50 seconds to the epic two and a half minute "We Don't Like You." LOLI & THE CHONES name-checked in the press materials as well as on the back cover (via swank T-shirt) and the vinyl backs it up. Get down and get with it! (DD)
(Alien Snatch!, Morikeweg 1, 74199 Untergruppenbach, GERMANY, www.aliensnatch.de)

THOUGHT RIOT - "Shattered Mirror" CD

Melodic hardcore from Modesto, California. They're very emotional. (AD)
(A-F, PO Box 71226, Pittsburgh, PA 15213)

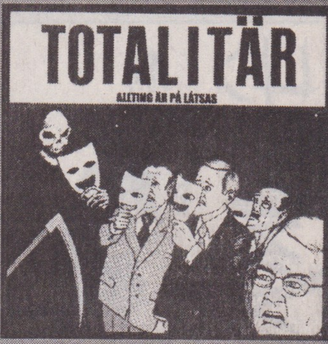
TIME IN MALTA/BREATHE IN - split 10"

TIME IN MALTA certainly have evolved quite a bit since I saw them for the first time in around 1998 or so. The three tracks on this split show TIME IN MALTA redirecting from the ultra heavy, aggressive music evidenced on the *Construct and Demolish* LP to a more melodic sound that reminds me a bit of later SEAWEED or even HUM. But then again, there's still a

few aggressive flashbacks (e.g. "This Revolution".) The production here is really good-almost too good. I can see people giving TIME IN MALTA some degree of flak for this shift in sound, but I like it (though not as much as the old stuff.) I don't like BREATHE IN at all. I'll admit, part of this has to do with their overly-aggressive, major-label-like "PR" tactics, or maybe the fact that they are so adamant about associating themselves with BLACK FLAG that it would make Greg Ginn sick. I could go on and on with that tangent, but the fact of the matter is that the songs here are just so pretentious in nature that...argh. I mean, the songs sound okay... they sound like an average run of the mill punk band on the cusp of "hardcore" who spent hours and hours in the studio, but nothing more than that. (SP)
(State of Grace, PO Box 8345, Berkeley, CA 94707)

TO SEE YOU BROKEN - "This Means Nothing" EP

I'm going to be totally honest. I really don't like this record musically. It is kind of boring mosh-hardcore that reminds me a scene that I have become totally disgusted with. And I don't think Straight Edge needs to be pushed on anyone at this point. But I am *so* fucking happy to see a hardcore band made up of all girls!!! It is so rare to even see any girls involved with punk rock, much less hardcore, much less a band made up of all girls. I am just so fucking happy to see this record and to hear it. It means there is more to come, and that maybe at some point we can have a more balanced scene in general. Also, I should note, the lyrics are totally sincere, dealing with issues like sexism which are seldom discussed in many styles of hardcore. (WR)
(Agitprop!, PO Box 748, Hanover, MA 02339, www.agitproprecords.com)



TOTALITÄR - "Allting Ar Pa Latsas" EP

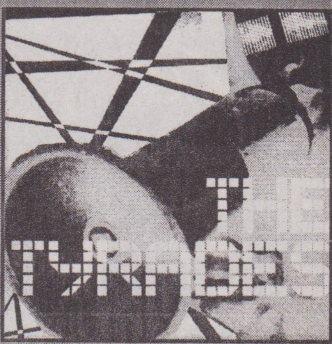
TOTALITÄR continue to amaze! This five song EP absolutely scorches the surface of the planet!! Staffan and Really Fast Records from Stockholm, Sweden has continued the unflinching hardcore tradition of TOTALITÄR! Since beginning their punk career in 1986, these Swedes have been killing the punks dead for damn near two decades! Starting with the demos EP, *Snabb Livsgladje* on Finn Records, right through the *Multinationella Mordare* EP from April 1987, and the *Luftslott* EP on Looney Tunes Records, England, from August 1987, this band has never turned away from their mission: fast and hard thrash! This material was recorded in September 2000, and it fucking burns a whole in your cerebellum! This is a must-have for all fans of Swedish punk! (BR)
(Really Fast, Box 6170, SE-102 33 Stockholm, SWEDEN)

TRIAL BY FIRE - "Ringing in the Dawn" CD

This record has a pretty solid punk backbone, but the songs have just enough hooks to keep it interesting. Mostly uptempo songs, with screaming vocals that you can still understand most of the time. The guitars are crunchy but audible and rather catchy. Although most of the record has a edge, there are some pop punk elements (I know it's frightening, but sometimes the songs remind me of early RANCID—sorry). (PA)
(Jade Tree, 2310 Kennwynn Rd, Wilmington, DE 19810, www.jadetree.com)

TROMATISM - "Q.H.S." LP

Different styles of female/male vocals intermingling between the dark sounds and dirgy, speedy guitar tunes. Intelligent lyrics about drug use, queer issues, resistance, and the like. Themes of loneliness, being shut out and locked away are prevalent. These guys are deep and dark. A good D.I.Y production. (SR)
(Active Distribution, BM Active, WCIN 3XX, London, ENGLAND, jon@active.free-online.co.uk)



TYRADES – "I Got It All" EP

Who the TYRADES are, or what they look like, I couldn't tell you—in fact, there's little I'm sure of about anything. The TYRADES are, by all accounts, a Chicago band that remind me of nothing as much as MOOD OF DEFIANCE, BAGS, or early UXA: that is to say, tough-minded, jagged punk fronted by an outspoken female and played with a high degree of style and flash. Let's see what they do *next.* (JH)
(Broken Rekids, POB 460402, SF, CA 94146-0402 USA, www.brokenrekids.com)

UPPERCUT - "A Luta Continua" CD

Blasting hardcore interspersed with tough-as-nails breakdowns. The direction SICK OF IT ALL should have progressed. As LIFE'S HALT would have said—"Get in the pit, motherfucker!" (MT)
(I Scream, Broekstraat 10-1730 Kobbegem, BELGIUM)

VÅNING 5 - "Världens Största Demokrati" EP

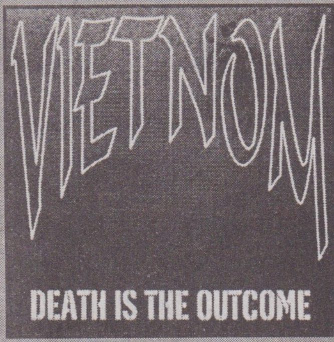
Once a five-piece, now a seven-piece, VÅNING 5 play thrashy political crustcore that's pummeling and fast, but melodic enough to rock out to. Hoarse, high little kid vocals from the female lead work nicely with throaty mid-range stuff from the boy singer. Song topics confront the USA's economic oppression of the rest of the world, harassment of immigrants in Sweden,

and more. I recommend this highly. (AC)
(Falafel Media c/o Jonas Nederman, Bovetevägen 15, 260 40 Viken, SWEDEN, vaning5@hotmail.com, www.falafelmedia.cjb.net)

VIETNOM - "Death is the Outcome" CD
Oh man, is this for real? Overproduced, super chunky NY style hardcore with tough vocals spewing out a stream of ridiculous gangster rap style lyrics. Songs about "whores," "niggaz," "drugs," "guns," "killers," and of course the infamous DMS Crew. Damn, maybe I didn't do enough push-ups today to really appreciate this. Yawn. (RC)
(Uprising, PO Box 42259, Philadelphia, PA 19104)

VILENTLY ILL - LP
I'm totally intrigued by this band, their (his) first LP (that I'm aware of) comes with 20 songs of Western Michigan influenced one man rage. Generic brilliant punk as fuck lyrics ("you've cut me off for the last time/you tailgaters must pay" or "let's light candles and hold hands/build a rainbow 'cross the lands/group hug"), and a fuzzed out guitar assault of rural fury. VILENTLY ILL ain't just a hardcore band, VILENTLY ILL is for fans of "fuck you" lo-fi rock and roll, fans of punk fucking rock, hell, I can even picture and art nerd sitting down and discussing the hidden meaning behind "Terminal Fuckup," and "shut Up and Deal With It." Write Mr.Lersten (VILENTLY ILL's sole member) and give him some money, my bet is that he'll send an interesting letter back your way. (WN)
(Knot Music, PO Box 501, South Haven, MI 49090-0501)

VIRGINIA BLACK LUNG – "Gentrifuckers" EP
VIRGINIA BLACK LUNG whips though seven tracks of hammering punk full of rage and turmoil. Chaotic drumming swirls together with some dark chunky guitar work and angry screams for a package that sort of reminds me of CATHARSIS. Excellent debut! (RC)
(Coalition, Hugo De Grootstraaat 25, 2518 EB Den Haag, NETHERLANDS)



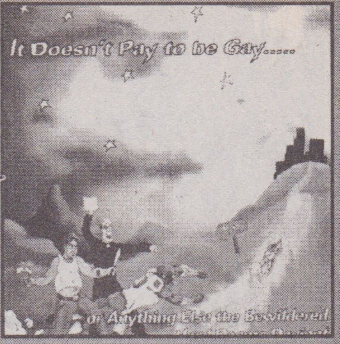
VITAMIN X - "Down the Drain" LP
I'm not sure what I can say about VITAMIN X that has not already been said three times over in the pages of this magazine. It has all been praise, and I can't do much more than reaffirm that praise. Putting aside their first two EPs, VITAMIN X's two newer EPs and LPs have been consistently good. These "dudes" from the Netherlands play fucking good thrash style hardcore. They play like they mean it, and they do mean everything they say. Their lyrics range from political issues, to scene issues, to personal issues, and they even have a song recounting the events of last years Chicago Fest. Listening to this record is a good fucking time. (WR)
(Underestimated, PO Box 13274, Chicago, IL 60613)

VOYD - "It Doesn't Pay to be Gay..." CD
This is supremely odd. No two songs are exactly alike, which is really quite refreshing. There are some FUGAZI parts, some JAWBREAKER parts, some HICKEY parts, and sometimes the singer is a dead fucking ringer for Kurt Cobain. They entirely refuse to limit themselves to any genre, and they even have some tracks of a guy reading from *On the Road*, and some Monty Python sound clips. Plus, the lyrics are all about hating Christianity and hanging out with Jack Kerouac. This may get old pretty soon, but for right now, this is pretty fucking rad. Also, despite the title, they are *not* homophobic. What a relief. (MX)
(MFE)

WEDNESDAYS - "Fury" CD
Starts off with wanky butt-rock tendencies combined with the hoarse whine currently *du jour* amongst the garage set. Sure beats tuff-guy barking or monotonous screaming. The rest of CD has a real identity problem, a refreshing counterpoint to the lock-groove identikit garage mold of "crazy singer in front of staid, musically conservative band." Some individual songs don't hold up too good, kinda like b-team Estrus stuff from mid '90s, but the overall feel of the record holds promise for the future. "Runaway Train Couldn't Drag Me Away" is a great song, loud! loud! loud! in the right way. (RW)
(Black Owl, no address)

WHAT WISHES WON'T MEND - "The Insomniac Diaries" CD
More generic metal hardcore from Florida. "Your helping hands are holding daggers awaiting insertion into my spine." What's the matter, kids, did you realize you were painfully unoriginal, and didn't want to make it worse by saying "you stabbed me in the back"? It didn't work. Metal guitar, metal vocals, generic lyrics about past relationships...this is tolerable, especially considering I just had to listen to EYES UPON SEPARATION, possibly the worst CD I have ever reviewed, and some of the heavier moments are pretty enjoyable, but give me CONVERGE any day. File this under: if you are into this sort of thing you might enjoy WHAT WISHES WON'T MEND. (WN)
(Goodfellow, 762 Upper James St. Suite 275, Hamilton, Ontario, L9C 3A2 CANADA)

WHIPPERSNAPPER - "Appearances Wear Thin" CD
What is the deal with incorporating rap-metal into skate punk? This is the second one this month. All of my complaints about the STRUNG OUT record apply here as well. Pretty useless. (MX)
(Fueled By Ramen, PO Box 12563, Gainesville, FL 32604, www.fueledbyramen.com)



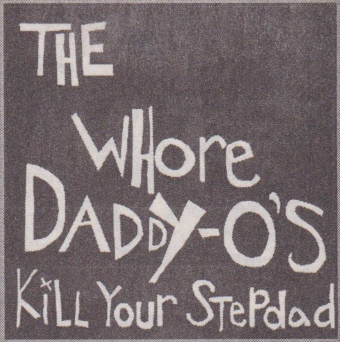
THE WHORE DADDY-O'S - "Kill Your Stepdad" EP
These DADDY-Os rip up six three-chord punk rock tunes on this disc. One tune is a love song to a '69 Gretsch guitar, another is a tune about how John Lennon is a crappy roommate (?), and another is about killing a jerky stepdad. I can't relate, but they're pretty cool songs. A rollicking surf instrumental is thrown in for good measure. (HM)
(Whore Daddy-O's c/o Nigel, 724A South 26th, Manitowoc, WI 54220, nigelsux@earthlink.net)

ZANUSSI - "Argumento" EP
ZANUSSI totally blaze through eleven songs of ear-shredding thrashy grind. Wild vocals screech out political rants against things like the death penalty, environmental destruction, injustices, and poverty. It is time to start getting hooked on all the rad hardcore and punk coming out of Spain these days. So buy up! (RC)
(Ozono Kids, PO Box 627, 08240, Manresa, SPAIN, www.ozonokids.cjb.net)

ZOUNDS - "This Land/Alone"
As far as I can tell, this is brand-new ZOUNDS, recorded as a benefit for for the McLibel Greenpeace campaign. Both songs have the flavor of the more meandering ZOUNDS outtakes you can review on Broken Rekids '01 *Curse of Zounds* collection. I appreciate that stuff, and can appreciate this. One complaint I have is it's almost too cleanly recorded, and I have to say sounds more like "Ziggy Stardust" than "War/Subvert." The lyrics are still bleak, but strangely hopeful, as is their way. (AC)
(Rugger Bugger, PO Box 357, London, SE19 1AD, ENGLAND, jon@activedistribution.org)

V/A - "All Over the Map" CD
Ok so I really need to get over my total disdain for CDs as a format—this comp, and ones like it, are nothing more than the digital version of the now seemingly archaic tape trades of yesterday. Take a bunch of bands no one has really heard of but you love and put it out—totally in the same spirit, but not as fun—in my humble opinion. Highlights for me on this comp would be the likes of MANCHURIAN CANDIDATES, FOUR MAN MARCH, PLANET TRASH, DAN DARE, and BORN DEADS. (MT)
(TFC, 6237 Hanley, Corpus Christie, TX 78412)

V/A - "Brewed in Sweden" 2xLP
You skinheads are in luck! Blind Beggar Records from Germany presents "The Premier League of Streetpunk/Oi!" double LP. This beautiful gatefold package (also available on CD format) features 26 tracks performed by 14 of Sweden's top punk rock and skinhead bands. The bands hail from all over the country, from north to south, and most all of them deliver tough-sounding streetpunk. Some of the most memorable tracks are supplied by AGENT BULLDOGG, UNIT LOST, DIMS REBELLION, WILDCAT STRIKE, FREEMARTINS, the PINTS, and SNIFFING GLUE. This compilation is packed with great streetpunk and Oi!, and reminds the rest of the world what a vibrant music scene Sweden has! (BR)
(Blind Beggar, Bogenstr. 25, D-66957, Eppenbrunn, GERMANY, www.blindbeggar@oirecords.com)



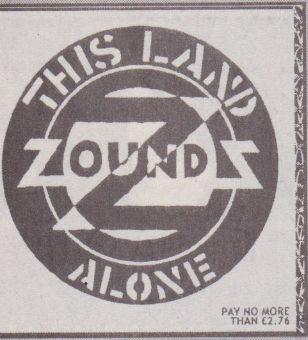
V/A – "California Ain't Fun No More" CD
Yeah, no kidding…and we've gotta live here. We got freeway shootings, exploding meth labs (watch out), packs of rabid pitbulls roaming urban areas, kids on drugs, parents on roller skates. It's enough to make a grown man cry and ride the rails to Akron post-haste. *California Ain't Fun No More* is a fun-filled compilation of (mostly) Bay Area bands (our own Shane White's LOOSE LIPS, motor-mavens the DEMONICS, FLAKES, the LOUDMOUTHS, EASYS, BOBBY TEENS, FEVERS), along with the PINKZ, REHABS, STUPOR STARS, SUPERBEES, and the dearly departed BITCHSCHOOL. Note for note, these bands are in the punk-garage-and-roll camp, and will get your hair tossing, your toes tapping, your beer swilling and your brain twitching. (JH)
(Just Add Water, PO Box 420661, San Francisco, CA 94142, www.justaddwaterrecords.com)

V/A - "For-Zero-Too Records" CD
First of all, if you open this CD, the first thing that you will see is a statement talking about how this CD is an example of their scene uniting and cooperating in order to raise money to help local bands put out records. And this compilation shows an example to follow. It is a very positive thing, which gave me a good first impression. Second of all, there are some really good bands on this comp. BOY CAUGHT plays really good melodic punk rock with gruff vocals and a little emo (not too much to sour the operation), reminding me of earlier AMERI-

vocals and a little emo (not too much to sour the operation), reminding me of earlier AMERICAN STEEL or SMALL BROWN BIKE. ROCKET FM reminds me a lot of the BROADWAYS, and I think the below-standard production benefits them. ONE SIZE FITS MOST plays really cool melodic punk rock which reminds me a lot of D.B.S., and has a kind of unique sound. Besides that there is some noise stuff, acoustic stuff, grind stuff, and just weird stuff on this comp. It's a really cool representation of a scene which I previously knew nothing about. (WR)
(For Zero Too, PMB #114, 3201 South St., Lincoln, NE 68502-3266, forzerotoorecords@hotmail.com)

V/A - "Four Way to Hell" EP

Two Brazilian bands, paired up with one Japanese and one Dutch band. GRITOS DE ALERTA (Brazil) start it all off with pounding fury—beats-a-blasting and vocals chords ripped! Following them we have BEYOND DESCRIPTION (Japan) who I've like in the past but this time their raw punk attack just doesn't do it for me. On the flip we have SICK TERROR (Brazil) who always rip in my book in such a weird LÄRM meets LIFES BLOOD sorta way. Finally we have LADY DIE! (Holland) who seem sorta out of place on this slab of vinyl with their very TEAM DRESCH-style punk. (MT)
(Terrötten, c/o Renan Favero, PO Box 8080, Porto Alegre - RS, 90201-970, BRAZIL)



V/A - "No Core" LP

This is the first vinyl pressing (a bootleg) of a tape comp released on Raleigh, NC's No Core Records in '82. It features CORROSION OF CONFORMITY, NO ROCK STARS, NO LABELS, and COLCOR. The kids give props to COC, but the other three deserve theirs too, and this LP'll prove it to you. Teen hectic and blazing, excellent '82 hardcore all the way through, as you'd expect, and the fuzzy production is no detraction from the sound, but if anything lends authenticity to the listening experience. This is a solid comp, perfectly designed to come screaming out of your shitty boombox (or now, turntable) while you're fucking shit up on the ramp in your Mom's backyard. Original photocopy insert enclosed. (AC)
(Raw Deal, no address)

V/A - "Reality, Part 4" LP

Was it really necessary to put out a fourth, incredibly lacking volume of a series that previously ruled? I don't think so. There some exceptions and some notably good bands on this record (324, LACK OF INTEREST, MANCHURIAN CANDIDATES, UNRUH, DAMAD), but how can even those bands (who are *definitely* the highlights, compare with *Reality* comps of yesteryear? How does HAWGJAW, PROGERIA, or SU19B compare with MAN IS THE BASTARD, CAPITALIST CASUALTIES, SPAZZ, INFEST, ASSHOLE PARADE, CRUDOS, PHOBIA, HELLNATION, DROP DEAD (just to name a few)??? Answer: It doesn't. Is this the future of "power violence"? Gee, I hope not. (SP)
(Deep Six, PO Box 6911, Burbank, CA 91510)

V/A "Red Snerts—The Sound of Gulcher"

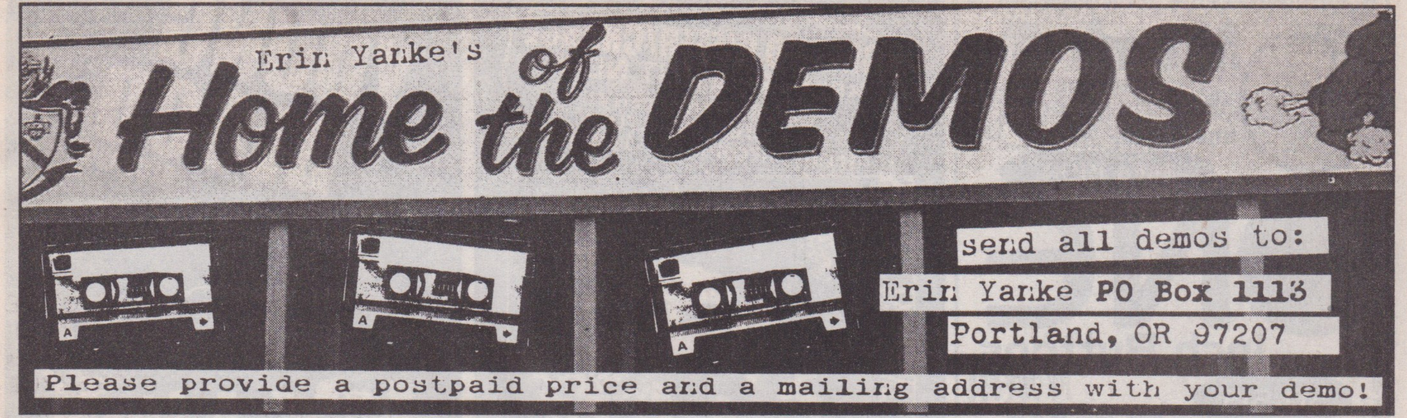
Captured here are the vintage sounds of hard new wave/punk rock presented similiarly to the *Killed By Death* series. Includes lots of early '80s stuff like ZERO BOYS, the GIZMOS, the PANICS, DOW JONES & THE INDUSTRIALS, etc. All right for a listen, but hardly essential. (DL)
(Hate, Circ.Ne Gianicolense 112, 00152 Roma ITALY)

V/A "Red Snerts—The Sound of Gulcher"

For those of you keeping score this in fact a re-ish of a majority Indiana comp from 1981. Really good repro down to the lyric sheet. Just so ya' know. (MT)
(Hate, Circ.Ne Gianicolense 112, 00152 Roma ITALY)

V/A - "What Would Mummy Say" CD

Remember back in the '80s when kids would out comp tapes with loads of bands you'd never heard of and about two you had? Well this is the modern day equivalent of "up and coming" bands from the UK, Norway, Germany, and Sweden. Nearly all of the bands fall into the pop-punk or ska-punk territory and most had me reaching for the fast forward button. Bands like MELTED CAT, SLAP MADCAP, STIMILION, GECKO, LAMINATOR, and about 13 others which I'm not even going to mention were Fat Wreck wannabes, insipid pop-punkers, or totally forgettable. This comp was saved only by the fantastic mod-punk of ANNALISE, the REZILLOS-style madness of EASTFIELD, and the crisp pop-punk of VANILLA POD (all three songs appear on their own releases which I'd urge you to buy)... the rest I'd rather not think about again. (TB)
(www.frozenorth.com)



BLACK BRICK KISS are Jacqueline's pick of the month. She raves they are emo hardcore at its finest, ranking with FUEL in intensity, although more vocally than musically. That other emo heavyweight, FUGAZI, makes an appearance as an influence as well, but they do stray a bit, like when the guitars reach for the metal heavens for the fast bits. (8 song CD, no lyric sheet. 803 Thomas Ave., St. Paul, MN 55104.)

BLUE SKY GOODBYE play slow paced moody melodic emo-ish rock. Think CHRISTIE FRONT DRIVE without as much punch. (5 song CD, lyric sheet. 151 Wellington Pkwy, Noblesville, IN 46060.)

CLAN OF THE BLEEDING EYE is a whole mess of folks playing tribal crusty punk, with buzzing guitars and keyboards, lots of drumming. I can't even tell how many vocalists there are, but they sing like super-evil growling style, lots of different pitches and styles, and have some chanting parts. Their other demo is a live recording, which sounds chaotic and sort of hard to hear what's going on, but good thing I just saw them to know that's actually what they sound like, and it's not just the recording. It's a good representation of a spectacle band, although they really need to be experienced in person. ($3 ppd. each. 6 songs on the studio demo, and on the live one I lost count of the songs, but it's a full set, about 20 minutes, lyric sheet with the first, no lyric sheet for the live one. PO Box 21588, El Sobrante, CA 94820-1588.)

FFI play some basic rock, midtempo, with a vocalist that sometimes sounds like later Gary Floyd with less grit and more rhymes. Sometimes though, the guy goes for straight up pop punk melodic singing. ($10. 14 song CD, no lyric sheet. PO Box 72546, Las Vegas, NV 89170-2546.)

FLAT EARTH RECORDS MP FREE sampler comp finds Sned closing the door on his label after 16 years of the gritty hardcore, but before packing it all in he's offering up his version of the last supper. It's a great comp, and better yet for y'all it's free if you have a computer and all that technology. www.flatearth.free-online.co.uk. This CD is not for sale, so find a friend with a computer and get this. Features DOOM, PINK TURDS IN SPACE, LOS CRUDOS, EBOLA, and countless others. (42 song CD, lyric sheet on website with CD.)

FLESH COLORED CHRISTS personify the definition of screamo. The vocals are more up front than anything, so the music is hard to hear, but sounds like slow murky hardcore, that bursts out some mayhem occasionally. (9 song cassette, although there are 5 songs, then the first 4 are repeated from a practice tape, lyric sheet. 505 17th Street, San Diego, CA 92101.)

FUCKED UP play some fast classic thrash part/mosh part hardcore, with a gruff and screaming vocals. They blend a bit into the mayhem hardcore category, when there is so much going on I can picture being at one of their shows and the energy sweeping up everything in its path. (5 song cassette, lyric sheet. 34 Park Blvd., Toronto, Ontario, M8W 1G8, Canada.)

GARANTERAT MOB 47 is a compilation tribute tape to, that's right, MOB 47 on the first side and on side 2 has the last practice of MOB 47, recorded in September, 1986. The bands included are, from Sweden, CROSSING CHAOS, HELLSHIT, VAPNAD KONFLIKT, SPRECKFORLOSSNING, SPECIAL DATRULLEN, KURBITS I.R., and THE SPITZ, and from the states, AKKOLYTE, WAR MACHINE, and SCORNED. The quality is pretty low fi, but I don't think that necessarily takes away from the thrash power, as long as you can turn your tape player up real loud. On the other hand, the practice tape side sounds really great musically, the vocals are sort of low, but that's just nit picking. I was impressed with the quality, which means you don't have to be a rabid fan of MOB 47 to enjoy this. (36 song cassette, no lyric sheet. c/o Krogh, Edgrensg. 27, 67150 Aruika, Sweden.)

HCA has a mid 80s, Midwestern hardcore feel to it, tough and midtempo with up front vocals sung mixing crooning and shouting together. I really like it, straight forward punk without being cookie cutter style. Good job. (7 song CD, no lyric sheet. 3903 Brazilnut Ave., Sarasota, FL 34234.)

THE HORRIBLE ODDS are playing your theme songs and you don't even know it. Better than that, they're tough and catchy, and the perfect thing to get stuck in your head to make you walk proud and punk. They are Iggy Scam and 3/4ths of the JACK PALANCE BAND, melodic punk like the early 80s, not the early 90s. ($2. 11 songs, no lyric sheet. PO Box 40272, San Francisco, CA 94140.)

LIGHTER THIEF's first 2 songs sound like the Grant Hart songs on the major label HUSKER DU records, but the vocals have lots more reverb. The last 2 songs are more of a emo fest, but kind of like THE CURE, too. (4 song CD, lyric sheet. 308 Hartford Drive, Hamilton, OH 45013.)

NAME IT YOURSELF plays mid tempo poppy punk, but it's got a little grit to it, some speeded up sort of driving parts, and some less straight forward parts. The songs are hook filled and sung in both Spanish and English, and, in both languages, the harmonies sound like "wooo-oh". (6 song cassette, lyric sheet. Av. Dr. Altino Arantes, #895, Apto. 204. Vila Clementino, Sao Paulo, Brasil.)

THE PLOT are about two thirds screaming modern hardcore in the BORN AGAINST vein, but the remaining third is made up equally of THE MINUTEMEN and NATION OF ULYSSES, with some dissonant sax thrown in. (3 song cassette, lyric sheet. 505 17th Street, San Diego, CA 92101.)

ROBOT HAS WEREWOLF HAND play the kind of hardcore you can dance to, and thrash to. That means they're mostly fast and pounding, with the break parts being almost melodic in comparison. Dual screamers for vocals. (6 song cassette, lyric sheet. 19 Tremont Ave., Buffalo, NY 14213.)

SAD SOCIETY has early LA punk influences, but it varies which ones. One song is like CHANNEL 3, another like THE WEIRDOS...so we'll just keep paying attention to see where they develop to. Good start, though. (3 song CD, no lyric sheet. 29 Durar Drive, Clermiston, Edinburgh EH4 7HW, Scotland, UK.)

STRAITJACKET goes down the road of melodic punk, but takes the hard road when traditional pop punk takes the easy road. It's fucking catchy, bopping your head around, but with a tough side. They play like a harder THE STRIKE, influenced by early '80s hardcore, and gruff English catchy punk, let's say like LEATHERFACE, equally. ($4 ppd. 8 song CD, lyric sheet. 2923 SE 17th, Portland, OR 97202.)

VENIAL I.V. have a new release, half well-recorded studio stuff and half live recordings, that sound like, well, when you took a tape to the show and taped it standing by the PA. But now for the music, which though still about the thrash attack, seems more screamy...More and/or different vocalists? Male and female? I can't tell, but still super energetic, still really good. I also feel this one is more straightforward, but still, as we said before: straight edge for punks, not jocks in hoodies. ($5 ppd. 11 CD, lyric sheet. PO Box 9263, Missoula, MT 59807. I think that the envelope said $3 for a cassette, but I can't find it to be sure)

WITCH HUNT play half kind of fast sloppy chaotic punk. Sloppy is not negative, by the way. They have slow parts to their fast songs. There's a really cool droning quality to some of the guitar playing, which I really liked, and added to the doomed feeling of the stories they are telling with their lyrics. The vocals are mostly of the furious spitting-them-out kind, but there are sometimes cool backing vocals that are more harmonic. Good stuff. (6 song cassette, lyric sheet. 72 Brian Rd., West Caldwell, NJ 07006.)

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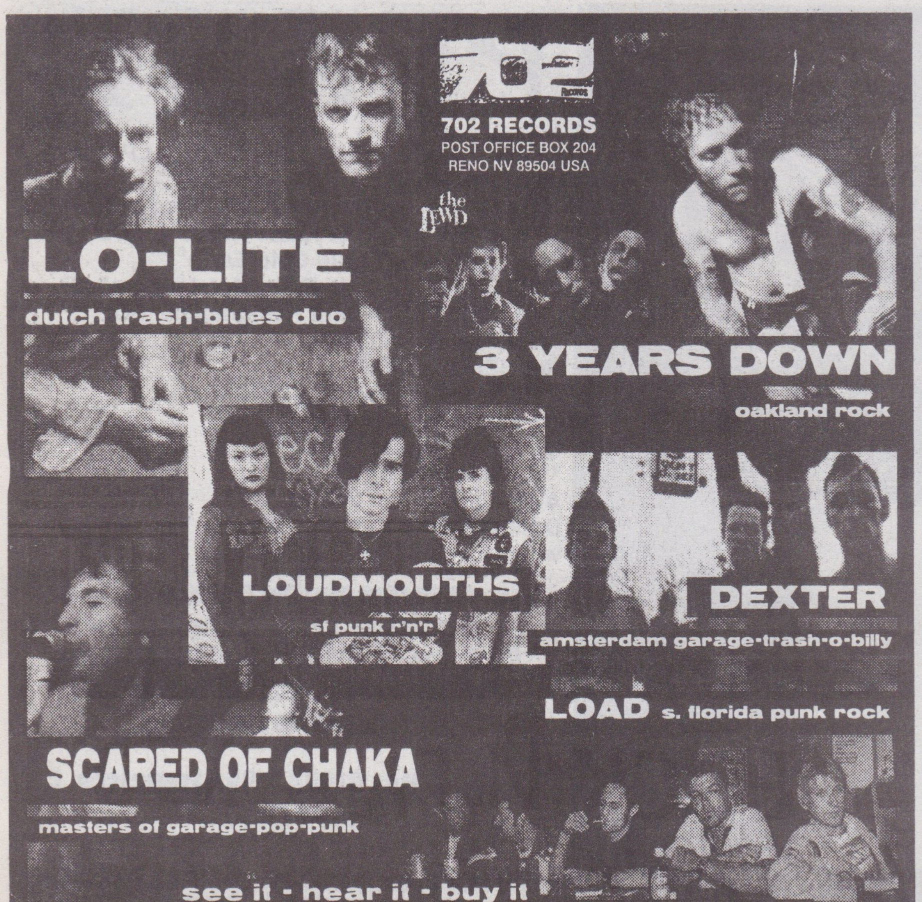

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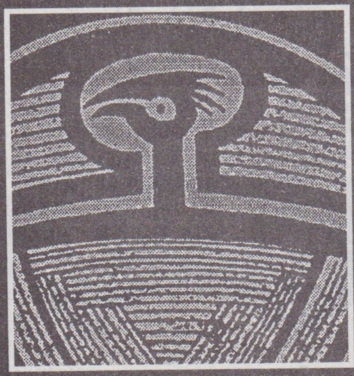

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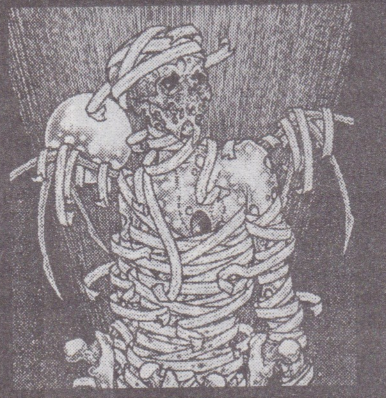

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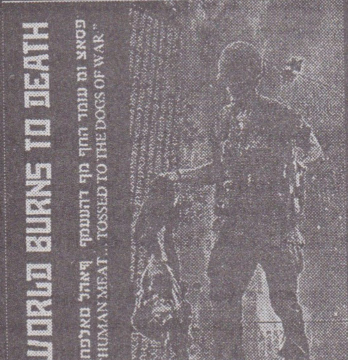

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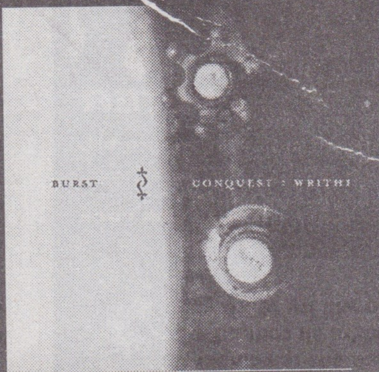

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ZINES

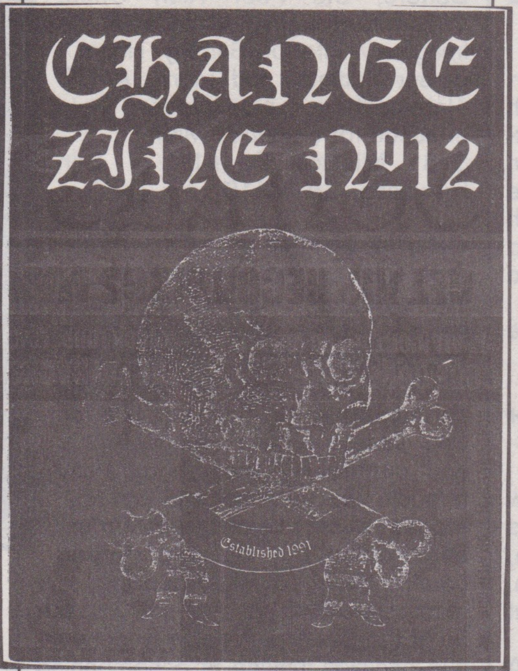
Reviews by: (AC) Arwen Curry, (AR) Aragorn, (KC) Karoline Collins, (MD) Mikel Delgado, (RD) Raphael DiDonato, (SD) Sara Double-Ears, (GF) Gardner Fusuhara, (HH) Harald Hartmann, (JM) Jeff Mason, (JL) Jennifer L. Mushnick, (NN) Nellie Nelson, (MN) Mimi Nguyen, (CR) Casey Ress, (DS) Denise Scilingo, (MT) Mike Thorn, (GZ) Gordon Zola.

Please send your zine in for review. Write down any information you want included in the review; method of printing, number of pages, issue number and post paid price. If you want us to include a foreign post paid price, tell us. If you accept trades, tell us. The only information we will include is what you provide us.

15TH PRECINCT #5 / $5
6 x 8.25 - printed - 88 pgs
This is a pretty great zine from Australia which really reflects Bianca's love for punk rock and it's respective scene. Interviews with The Casualties, F-Minus, US Bombs, Anti-Flag, Strange Stains, Ant Sang, and one of the more interesting, albeit brief, interviews with Ian Mackaye that I've read in some time. Not the slightest hint of pretension or jade-ism can be found here and that is most certainly a breath of fresh air! Comes with a CD with 21 Aussie punk bands, which is worth the price of the zine alone. (MT)
PO Box 1390 / Capalaba, Queensland / Australia 4157

ANCHORAGE / CARDIOSTITY / INTERNAL PAPERCUTS
#1 / stamps
5.5 x 4.25 - copied - 46 pgs
A month or so ago, I was lucky to have reviewed the previous issue of *Internal Papercuts*. So this is actually issue number two of *Anchorage* and issue number three of *Internal Papercuts*. When this little three-way split number landed in my hands for review, I was stoked. I like all of these zines and how they all come together into one volume of stories and anecdotes that complement each other really well in their unpretentious, simplistic style. There is nothing fancy here, so if you want some *Cometbus*-like publication filled with deep insights and self-important revelations to jack off to, pass this one up. These writers reflect on youth without the cheesy nostalgia of an emo zine in a way that reminds me a little bit of another zine that I like a lot, *Cholesterol Junkie*. I highly recommend this one. (JL)
Aaron / 477 Colon Ave / San Francisco, CA 94127

BREAK THE CHAINS #9 / free on request / donations accepted
8.5 x 11 - copied - 8 pgs
This is the "Newsletter of the Northwest Political Prisoner Support Network" and, as you'd expect, it's filled with news on political prisoners. Mostly short briefs and a contact list, *BTC* also includes an exchange between Rob (Los Ricos) Thaxton and Jeffrey "Free" Luers, which was included in the last issue of *Disorderly Conduct*. Utilitarian and to the point.



Also contains the cryptic and mysterious subtitle "Capitalism Gives Opportunities in Life! Anarchy Gives Life!" Yes, and don't forget that General Electric Brings Good Things to Life because that is just about as meaningful as a movement slogan. Also, I believe they misspelled their acronym in the ordering information. Is it mean to point that out? After all, it *is* a free zine supporting people who need support. (GZ)
NAPSN / PO Box 11331 / Eugene, OR 97440
gumbycascadia@yahoo.com

BROKEN GLASS BARBED WIRE STREET FIGHT #7 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 32 pgs
This is the "Wicked Hardcore Issue." I'm not really sure why, nothing seems exceptionally wicked or hardcore about this here zine. It does contain a rather surreal DOA tour diary—especially the part about being worried that the Soulfly concert in the same town might be competition. I mean I thought DOA was still a punk band, so how could a big metal band really effect their show too much? Same with the part about playing the rock festival—bizarre and very far removed from my world. What was interesting to read in this puppy was the interview with Chris Walter, author of the book *Punk Rules OK*, which provided a great insight into the history of the Winnipeg hardcore punk scene. (MT)
5-2043 Stainsbury Ave / Vancouver, BC / Canada V5N 2M9

BUSCA Y DESTRUYE #2 / $5
11 x 8 - printed - 48 pgs - Spanish
A totally great new zine from Spain that touches the style of punk, hardcore, oi, and grindcore. Some bands featured through interviews are Intolerance, Delincuencia Sonora, Oi! N'ast, and Banda Bassotti. There is also a "What's Happening?" column, gig and record reviews, and comics. The zine also comes with a pretty good CD sampler that features loads of bands, including a cut by Adrenalin O.D. (HH)
APDO 1140 / 28800 Alcala de Henares / Madrid / Spain

CHANGE ZINE #12 / $2
8.5 x 11 - printed - 120 pgs
It's been over three years since the last issue of *Change Zine* came out and the editor, Patrick, has crammed several interviews, reviews, and personal anecdotes into this lengthy issue. Most of the content relates to NY/East Coast hardcore music culture and the editor's grapplings with his past and present in relation to hardcore music, values, esthetics, etc. Some interviews include a conversation with Lars Weiss, Johnny Temple, Sweet Pete of In My Eyes, Steve Albini, Chaka Malik formerly of Burn, and Max Ward. Overall, I think that this zine is really well done, unapologetically combining the author's interests, reflections, and commentary with contributions from a wide variety of folks engaged in musical and other communities/projects ranging from the NBA to a historical analysis of feminism to hardcore music. (JL)
PO Box 416 / Mamaroneck, NY 10543

CHICKENHED ZINE AND ROLL / HOPEWELL #4 / $1 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 48 pgs
With a split zine, you're usually guaranteed to like at least half of it. Both sides of this were pretty good, mostly personal stories about small town life (*Hopewell* is the slightly more nature-boy side; *CZAR* is more high school drinking stories). There's also instructions on home brewing and reviews. (MD)
Francis Hopewell / 2915 Kenmore Ave / Dayton, OH 45420

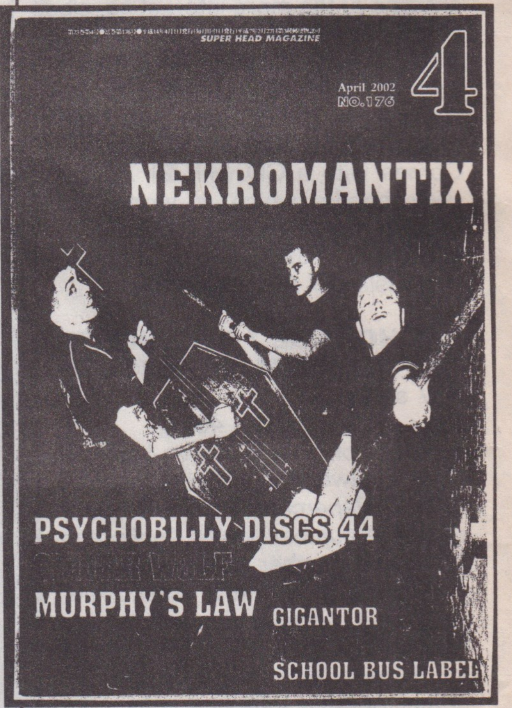
CHUMPIRE #146 / 1 stamp or trade
8.5 x 14 - copied - 2 pgs
If you've read this before, you know it's small bits and pieces of reviews and the editor's life—the scene, books he's read, movies he's seen, local bands, etc. Not much there, but it's priced right. (MD)
PO Box 680 / Conneaut Lake, PA 16316-0680
chumpire@hotmail.com

CONFESSIONS OF A FORMER HIGH SCHOOL CHEERLEADER #1 / $2.57
4 x 5.5 - copied - 76 pgs
I highly recommend this zine. It's a post-riot grrrl, personal zine of top quality. *Confessions* is filled with smart perspectives from a mixed race, feminist ex-punk, who's happy to be alive at age 21. Tasha writes about depression, racism in the punk and zine scenes, feelings of invisibility, finding a sweet boyfriend, and dealing with writer's block. All in a much more intelligent and together way than much of this genre (and I like this genre). In one of the intro pieces Tasha admits she wants to be famous and adored. All I can say is, keep writing. It may not lead to stardom, but the zinesters will love you. (GZ)
c/o Pander Zine Distro / PO Box 582142 / Minneapolis, MN 55458-2142
tasha@cuntabulous.com

COOL BEANS! # 14 / $ 5.95
8.5 x 11 - printed - 66 pgs
It's been over a year since the last issue, and so Matt Kelly kicks off its return with a "drugs, alcohol, and sobriety" theme. *Cool Beans!* is a regular mix of columns, comics, essays and interviews. This issue includes Bob Madigan of Fluff Grrl, Tumult Records, Hood, Loners with Boners, the Poor Rich Ones, William Burroughs, "One Day in the Imaginary Life of Sammy Hagar," career addicts, and more. A CD "Intoxication Compilation" is attached for a bonus. (MN)
3181 Mission St #113 / San Francisco, CA 94110

CRUDE NOISE #2 / $2 or trade
7.5 x 8.5 - copied - 48 pgs
The lovely silk-screened cover of a heart (complete with woodcut veins and aorta) in various shades of pink, no less, bookends the wonderful contributions to this compilation zine. Essays on reproductive rights and community that thoughtfully straddle the personal and political; stories about personalities, trips, and bodies out of control; and comics about bicycles, dancing, and reading are (believe it or not) just the tip of the iceberg. A guide to consensus decision-making is accompanied by an amazing series of essays about gender, fashion, and subversion, and the sociopolitical meanings of the intimate, everyday details of dancing and waitressing. This compilation feeds all kinds of hunger—for art, for politics, for connection, for fun, for intellectual engagement. (For instance, there's a neat deconstruction of the construction and contingent process of what counts as "natural.") An exemplar in the zine world, for real. Get this or be bummed forever. (MN)
Meredith / PO Box 19136 / Pittsburgh, PA 15213

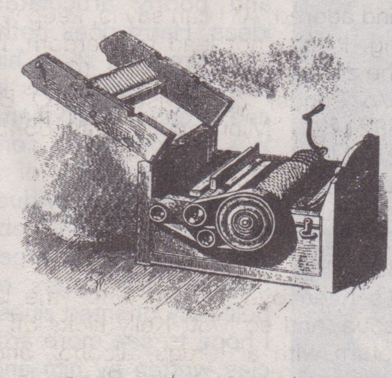
DOLL #176 / ?
7 x 10 - printed - 154 pgs
Another month, another issue of *Doll*. Despite my total inability to read a word of this, every month that this shows up I just eat it up—if for no other reason than the photos of band that I will never get to see—like the almighty Balzac! Yeah! Include in this issue are interviews with Guitar Wolf, Murphy's Law, Zodiac Kilers and a reprint of *MRR's* talk with Lengua Armada records.Also we have a Exclaim/Jellyroll Rockheads tour diary! Always a joy. (MT)
NO 303 Aota bldg / 3-1-9 / Kita / Kohenji / Suginami-Ku, Tokyo / Japan



DROP OUT #5 / $2
8.25 x 9 - copied - 36 pgs
I've gotta say that *Drop Out* is one of the nicest looking zines that's landed in my bin in a long time. Excellent layout, awesome photos/graphics and tales ranging from a "fucking mental" pickled onions "beat down" and chip liberation at SF's Edinburgh Castle, to adventures with "ice cream scoops" and cervixes at the Long Haul info shop in Berkeley. Fucking hilarious! Also found in here is an interview with

Kieran Chapman of eWire (former publisher of *Radazine* and now running the aforementioned BMX website) which was short and informative even to someone like me (who knows nothing about the BMX scene). The photo essays from Matt Average (a document of the LA boxing scene), Tobin Yelland (love the photo of the hessian kid in the Mercyful Fate t-shirt!), Sandy Carson and Ed Docherty (whose piece also includes a brilliant short tale of being trapped in a van full of people and how to deal with it) are all top caliber and the photo reproduction is top notch. A few more stories, some poetry, and a Paris travel tale round out this issue. Its time to drop some cash in the mail for your own copy of *Drop Out* ! (KC)
Allan / PO Box 22971 / Oakland, CA 94609

DUNK AND PISS #7 / $1 or trade
4.25 x 5 - copied - 64 pgs
Picking up *Dunk and Piss* was like being able to relive my youth for a half hour or so...and because I'm 32 years old, this is a very good thing! Lots of quick, energetic, and humorous tales flowing on every page of this great little pocket sized goodie. Cartoons, getting off of probation, sending out bids for colleges (as in who will pay the most for the privilege of having Alex attend their institution of higher learning) instead of applications, losing the key to your room, playing with sledgehammers, fun with citric acid powder, expensive chocolate and dog poop, a reader contest, seeing how many times the police will come to the door during summer vacation, a few zine reviews and then...the best part of the whole fucking zine (insert drum roll) is a little tale called "the banner." I don't want to give it away, but let's just say that it involves spray paint, an old bed sheet, a band logo (17th Class), hot afternoon sun, a parental driveway and paint thinner. I'd love to know what happened when Alex's parents got home that night. Shoot, I've probably told you too much, eh?! Oh well. Entertaining writing style, good layout, funny subject matter, coffee/generic soda galore and the talents of one amazing 16 year-old. Give *Dunk and Piss* a whirl, especially if you're feeling old and jaded. You'll enjoy this no matter how old you are! Free to prisoners. (KC)
Alex / 11 Alger Drive / Rochester, NY 14624
alexyoshi@hotmail.com


power of a question

FIXING HER HAIR #1 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 28 pgs
The title is from an Ani DiFranco song, which gives you an idea of what to expect here... Even though it's not a music zine, some of the ideas are punk (I guess), but not particularly innovative or interestingly presented. She talks about the dearth of bi and tranny visibility, making porn, polyamory, and the current wartime propaganda. If you're interested in those topics enough to get through the bad formatting, and think that $2 isn't too much to spend on a small perzine, then hopefully you won't be as disappointed as I was. (NN)
Liberté / c/o Autonomous Zone / 2129 N. Milwaukee Av / Chicago, IL 60647
FreedBiArt@topseven.com

THE FREE PRESS DEATH SHIP #1 / donation
8.5 x 14 - copied - 46 pgs
Stylistically, this here is very much akin to Fred Woodworth's graphic design, and the content runs along similar lines as well. The focus is on zines as a last bastion of the free press, and a great number receive short reviews herein. Also included are correspondence (a back and forth on the practicality of violence); reprints from *the Match* (and a review of the novel *Dream World*), *Imagine*, and *the J. L. Hudson 2002 Etnobotanical Catalog of Seeds*; some editorial pieces on censorship, *de facto* and otherwise; and a piece on the post office. The *Ship* would be of interest mostly to those who are heck of stoked on zines, and I certainly enjoyed my experience. For US orders, $3 ppd would be a fair (for the reader and, I hope, the publisher) price. (JM)
PO Box 55336 / Hayward, CA 94545

GREEN ANARCHY #8 / $2
12 x 16 - printed - 24 pgs
This issue of *GA* has an article by Ted Kaczynski. This article titled "Hit Where it Hurts" would not have been published had the author not given that the point (that the system should be attacked where it hurts) is so obvious as to be insulting. The GA collective do give a caveat at the end of the article, but only along the lines of apologizing for Ted's disparaging attitude towards women and queer culture and not for his article's relative irrelevance. Otherwise this issue reprints Ward Churchill's excellent "Some People Push Back," the best essay to come out of the left since 9/11. The Zapitistas' respond to the criticism that they are not anarchist (in their generally humorous style), the Greek Anarchist scene is highlighted, as well as Argentina and other direct action. *Green Anarchy* is an important part of the current anarchist scene and their criticism of civilization is necessary in general. (AR)
PO Box 11331 / Eugene, OR 97440

INFILTRATION #17 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 24 pgs
Not a zine I thought I would piss my pants over, and truth be told my pants are still rather dry. But all issues of bladder control aside, *Infiltration* is a zine dedicated to the art of being somewhere you're not supposed to be. This issue is all about climbing buildings for shits and giggles or political protest. More interesting than I thought it would be. I'm looking for-

ward to other issues about sneaking around. (CR)
PO Box 13 / Station E / Toronto, ON M6H 4E1 / Canada

LAMBS ON HELIUM #1 / $3
cassette - copied - 60 minutes
Some people love to fuck around on a 4 track recorder. Some people love to listen to these creations, but it is not my idea of a good time. There's some people speaking with guitar effects and miscellaneous noises, and some New Orleans bands. I could not concentrate on any of the talkin' enough to appreciate whatever the people were trying to convey. Antarctica vs. the World sound pretty good, tough-sounding punk rock, but I had to turn it off for the classic rock cover. *No classic rock!!!* This is art in the bad sense of the term. (JM)
1500 Beachview Dr / Ocean Springs, MS 39564

THE LITTLE BLACK STAR #9 / one stamp
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 8 pgs
A short but great little newsletter to compliment your daily paper. The issue has several reports on Afghanistan, the terrorist training center formerly known as the School of the Americas, and US assistance to the Georgian military. I would hope you'd be able to get some back issues too if you enclosed a dollar or something. (JM)
PO Box 197 / Lewisburg, PA 17837

NEUS SUBJECT #35-43 / ?
3.5 x 8.5 - copied - 1 pg
Neus Subject is always a winner in my book. Reviews, gossip and commentary from one man who most certainly loves his scene and loves punk rock. The layout can't be beat and the content is always top notch. Send him a pile of cash now. Thanks. (MT)
PO Box 18051 / Fairfield, OH 45018-0051

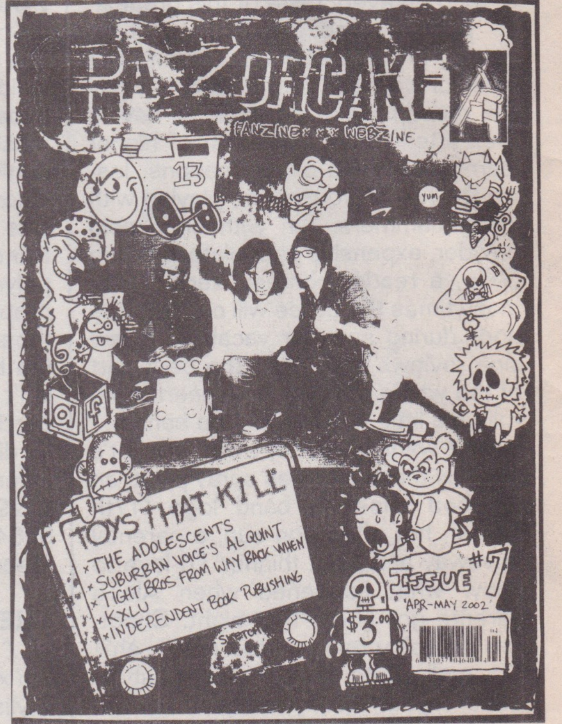
THE NEW DARK AGES #1 / trade
8.5 x 7 - copied - 20 pgs
An impressive zine considering the author's youth, *The New Dark Ages* is an honest and impressive collection of political writing. Rather then attempting to follow the usual standard of political posturing, self-righteousness, and poorly articulated ideas, Harry does nothing more than share his personal experiences in and around Bellingham, WA. It works well, conveying the energy of a concerned individual without the stale cobwebs that usually linger between the pages of politically oriented zines. I hope to see more articles written by him and other contributors and less reprints in future issues, and maybe a little less of the somewhat difficult-to-decipher handwriting! (CR)
250 N State St #321 / Bellingham, WA 98225

NO PASARAN #7 / $2 world
8.5 x 11 - printed - 16 pgs - Spanish
Probably there are some Argentinean zines that suck, but all of the ones I've ever gotten are great reading. *No Pasaran* is no exception! One noteworthy feature is the interview with Brazilian band Garotos Podres—almost the whole thing is about scene politics, militarization, and history, with only the last question having anything to do with the band's releases. Interviews with the UK Subs and the Lurkers follow the more traditional format. All but two of the columns are a sort of diary of the editor's, focusing mostly on 9/11 and the US's limited perception of "terrorism." Very highly recommended. (NN)
C.C. 28, Suc Quilmes / 1878-Quilmes, Bs As / Argentina
info@nopasaran.com.ar

THE OUTSIDE WORLD #5 / $1 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 18 pgs
The Outside World is a journal of over-looked news. Interesting "lost news" section, as well as a piece on Afghanistan culture. However, the affinity for adding "rat" and other rodent prefixes to names in the more personal stories made for a tiresome read. (SD)
Normrat / 2121 19th St N / Arlington, VA 22201

POSITIVE CREED #2 / $2?
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 32 pgs
British zines are almost always above average. This is no exception. The articles and interviews are really good—there's information on the Dial House (the old Crass house/community center), plus interviews with the Pop Vandals, Mere Dead Men, and Zero Tolerance. There's a retrospective on Flux of Pink Indians that was quite interesting, plus loads of reviews, and unfortunately, some poetry, which I will never think is OK in a punk zine. (MD)
17a Charnley Ave / St Thomas, Exeter / Devon EX4 1RD / England

POWER OF A QUESTION #6 / $2
7 x 8.5 - printed - 28 pgs
I've been staring at the blinking cursor on the computer for a really long time,



because I just don't know how to write this review. UGH. OK (deep breath)...the actual physical product

called *Power of a Question* is truly a beautiful exercise in publishing. Printed on heavy cardstock, fantastic layout, and then within the pages, you've got three different mini-zines (one about the phone not ringing and getting into trouble as a child, one devoted to K Record reviews, and one for end notes) plus there are two pages of fold-out bits with great graphics, photos, and text. I really cannot do this any sort of justice with a verbal description. A masterpiece! Unfortunately, I wasn't quite as impressed with the actual writing. The reader gets to laugh at the funny post-cards sent to the author's girlfriend and then delve down through depression as the phone stops ringing, the letters stop coming, self doubt and coffee consumption increases...the zine's own intro sums it up best: "1 1/2 years of dark humor and depressing moments." Normally I love this kind of topic, but I must admit that in comparison to the phenomenal presentation, the writing just fell flat. I wanted the words to hit me over the head as hard as the packaging did...instead, the glaring typos hit me the hardest. I still want to recommend this, as it is truly a sight to behold (in case I hadn't gotten that point across yet) and maybe you'll enjoy the total package more than I did. Trades are welcome and $2 in stamps is also acceptable. (KC)
Brian Briggs / 602 Airport Rd #120 / Chapel Hill, NC 27514
poaq@hotmail.com

RAD PARTY #28 / $2 surface, $3 air
4 x 6 - printed - 84 pgs - French
Alright, that's it. I'm going to Paris, to visit hard-working, self-deprecating *Rad Party* editor Stéphane, the punk-est-as-fuck French person I know, not that I know many. For the life of me, I don't know how he cranks out this quality zine so frequently in a bustling city where there must be things to do. At least, I hope there are things to do—damn it, I'm gonna find out! Keep watching your doorstep, Stéphane—I'm coming! This issue is the 10-year anniversary issue—can you believe this shit? This is an era of zine anniversaries—this is a reassuring thing in general and my congratulations definitely go out to Stéphane. Included are synopses of the last decade of *Rad Party*, and the context—caffeine, heartbreak, etc.—in which each issue came to be printed. The rest of this issue contains his usual: timely, reflective prose on bands, labels, and zines that reveals an absolute devotion to punk; art, profiles, and the various states of his mind and heart thrown in. As usual, a pleasure to read, even though my limited French prevents me from absorbing many of the nuances of his tone. (AC)
Small Budget Productions / BP #7 / 78110 Le Vesinet Cedex / France / smallbudgetproductions@minitel.net

RAZORCAKE #17 / $3
8.5 x 11 - printed - 98 pgs
Man, this zine is punk. And I mean that in an old-school way. Unlike many music zines, there are things besides reviews that you might actually read in here: interviews with The Adolescents (w/before and after pics!), Al Quint (from *Suburban Voice* zine), and Toys That Kill, and a good article on independent book publishing. Also includes columns on why pirates are punk, the Juan Marichal/John Roseboro bat incident, the Nazi/Ford connection and lots more. The review section, by the way, is great. They even review this issue of *Razorcake*! It definitely has that SoCal punk feel to it which usually rubs this NorCal boy the wrong way, but I enjoyed this a lot. I don't think it's just because I'm getting old. (GZ)
PO Box 42129 / Los Angeles, CA 90042
www.razorcake.com

RESERVED #4/ $2
8.5 x 11 - copied - 40 pgs
This is an above average straight-edge zine that focuses its energy on the rock and roll music. Within are interviews from the likes of What Happens Next?, Kill Your Idols, and Charm City Suicides. There are a pile of East Coast-centered reviews. There are also columns populated by creatures resembling rants and not genius. (AR)
2602 Harford Rd / Fallston, MD 21047

RICE HARVESTER #9 / **MAN THIS SUCKS** #1 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 52 pgs
These two totally different zines compliment each other, much as I imagine editors Matte and Greg do as friends. *Rice Harvester* is that perfect combination of tall tales romanticized by hazy beer memory. Inspiring because Greg makes shitty times into good times. *Man This Sucks* is Matte's first attempt at a zine. Journal type stories with a strong personal voice. Plus there is an awesome story consisting of a series of block prints! Both zines are well written with an appealing layout. Good stuff. (SD)
PO Box 1581 / Chattanooga, TN 37401

ROLLERBONES / $1
4.5 x 5.25 - copied - 32 pgs
For those of you who look back on your childhood memories of roller-skating with fondness, you may want to get this. Fuck rollerblading, this is the real thing. It's pretty cutesy, with lots of childhood stories and reviews of movies featuring rollerskating (*Xanadu* is my fave of the lot). There's also instructions on making your own toe-guards. (MD)
PO Box 19554 / Po[illegible]nd, OR 97280

S.C.A.B. #4 / 60 din / $2 world
6 x 9 - printed - 48 pgs - Spanish
The writing in here is sometimes simplistic, but other times angry and articulate. If you like the bands interviewed (Dropkick Murphys, The Business, Real McKenzies, die Ärzte, Kud Idijoti, Electric Frankenstein, Psychotic Youth, Mad Butcher Records, Ignite, and a short dumb interview with the Dwarves), you'll probably enjoy most of the content. There's also columns, scene reports, and reviews (a section

of the reviews is dedicated solely to Mad Butcher Records releases). Worth checking out. (NN)
Dasko / Bulevar Oslobodenja 21/37 / 21000 Novi Sad / Yugoslavia
dasko@scabzine.net

SHREDDING PAPER #12 / $3.95
8.5 x 11 - printed - 100 pgs
I have to admit this zine covers a lot more music I listen to than *MRR* does...a wider variety of music at least. This issue features some excerpts from books on George W. and bin Laden that were informative (much more so than anything you're going to read in the mainstream press) and there's an interview with Soft Skull Press. Most of this is hundreds of reviews of punk/indie/pop music—something for everyone. Probably the best issue of this yet. (MD)
PO Box 2271 / San Rafael, CA 94912

SLUG & LETTUCE #70 / 57¢ postage US, $2 world
11.75 x 15 - printed - 20 pgs
It's fucking free! Columns, reviews, photos. The highlight for me was the column about a friend who committed suicide and a following discussion of depression, something I have been reading more of in punk zines, which can only be good for those who find it touching our lives (most of us). If you like her column (Chris{tine}), you'll love her zine. (GF)
PO Box 26632 / Richmond, VA 23261-6632

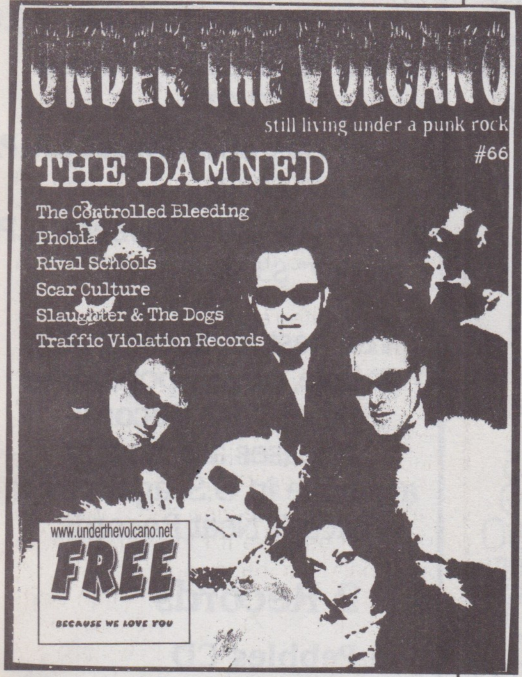
SPARE CHANGE #13 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 40 pgs
The reason I love zines so much is their ability to be made quickly and to capture very time specific feelings and events and to record them for future reader's enjoyment. This is well evidenced by the dozens of zines coming in to review that touch on the impact of the events of September and the ensuing terrorist strikes on Afghanistan. More interesting than the political analysis of US foreign policy and the righteousness of terrorism is the sharing of personal feelings and experiences. This is done well in *Spare Change*. The bulk of the zine is filled with those reflections, including a great article by Iggy Scam. Reading a great zine like this makes me feel that everyone should find a way to record their feelings in the background of the world were living in. If you don't have the energy to make a zine like this, at least buy it and keep it so years down the line you can look back and see how these events have shaped the world around you. (CR)
PO Box 6023 / Chattanooga, TN 37401

TRASH FACTION #3 / $1
8.5 x 11 - copied - 38 pgs
In a turbulent sea of post-adolescent testosterone, *Trash Faction* is a rock 'n' roll beacon of garage goodness. Not only is Jill Hubley a dedicated music fan with an impressive store of knowledge and enthusiasm, but she stands out in a scene whose surfaces, at least, are marred by misogyny and frat boy humor. Interviews and features with Tina Peel (and an accompanying history of 70s Pennsylvanian punk), The Offbeats (including a biography and an interview), The Kill-a-Watts, a short history of Rip Off Records, and the Fatal Flying Guilloteens. The most amazing feature is "Mapping the Soundscape: A Construction of Rock History," in which Jill painstakingly maps (literally) a kind of "six degrees of separation" for the rock 'n' roll scene of the last thirty years. Jill says, "The point is that it's interesting to see how you can get from Billy Idol to Candy Del Mar in just eight steps," and it comes complete with an index. Awesome. (MN)
Jill Hubley / 215 Willoughby Ave Apt #308A / Brooklyn, NY 11205
trashfaction@hotmail.com

TWENTY-EIGHT PAGES LOVINGLY BOUND WITH TWINE
#3 / $2 or trades
5.5 x 8 - copied - 28 pgs (duh)
Christoph writes about how enthusiastic he is for zining: "There's plenty of time for being an old (over thirty) jaded zinester...but for now I'm content to wallow in my naive enthusiasm." Over a third of the 28 pages is a detailed description of his wife giving birth. The rest of the zine is pretty much reactions to, and self-criticism of his first two issues, and an amusing scratch-and-sniff cartoon about the dangers of natural gas (if only PG&E would hire him to do their pamphlets!) *28 Pages* is somewhere between a public zine and a letter to friends. I feel like if I knew Christoph personally I'd hang on every word, but as an outsider my attention drifted at times. (GZ)
Christoph Meyer / PO Box 106 / Danville, OH 43014

UNDER THE VOLCANO #66 / free
8.5 x 11 - copied - 62 pgs
Hm. I haven't kept up with these guys much, but frankly, I expected a little better than I got here. This whole newsprint package reeks like a glossy press release in the *MRR* PO Box. Not like BLINK 182 style, or rabidly capitalist, or anything, just undiscerning about independent politics to the point of feeling disjointed, separate from what the whole punk thing is all about. You know, there's that point when the lines blur? They run major label ads, for example...for more cash than for indies, but so what? Gross. Don't they feel invaded and compromised? The layout here is on the extreme of the *MRR* derivative spectrum, down to the column headers. There is an overwhelming (and overwhelmingly boring) sense of white, heterosexual male, kinda ex-punk feeling about the prose in *UTV*. I found one woman's name in all of the credits, including, I think, all of the bands and folks interviewed. Of the interviews—more selective than *MRR*'s due to their being conducted by staff members—I was interested in

the one with Traffic Violation ('cause Wells is mint!), Phobia, and that's about it. (AC)
PO Box 236 / Nesconset, NY 11767
RBlackUTV@aol.com



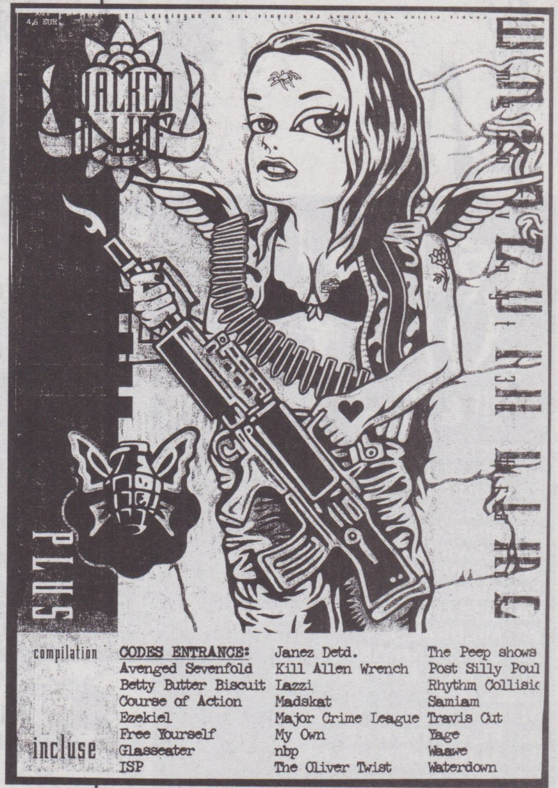
UNDERGROUND #17 / $3.50
8.5 x 11 - printed - 48 pgs
Functioning as a mouthpiece for the North American Animal Liberation Front, this publication mostly serves to update those interested in the status and experiences of "political prisoners" arrested for acts of animal rescue and protesting exploitation of animals on institutional levels as well as the latest actions taken by this organization. This issue is dedicated to deceased activist and prisoner Barry Horne, features a radio interview with Rod Coronado, and provides some advice for those engaging in protest, preparing activists for incursions with the legal system. A lot of the information seems really insular and while I am sure it is helpful if you are really invested in this kind of political work, I think that someone who is more versed in the history and present of this organization may be better able to give it a comprehensive review. (JL)
NA- ALFSG / PO Box 69597 / 5845 Yonge St / Willowdale, ON M2M 4K3 / Canada

WALKED IN LINE #20 / 30 ff, 4.6 Euros
8.75 x 11.75 - printed - 60 pgs - French
Walked In Line commences with a nice rant about public surveillance, and I was ready to go, but quickly confounded by some screw-up in the pagination. Shortly after, my bullshit detector immediately went off, because this is a zine-slash-catalog. Should the zine that criticizes new releases also sell them? I guess it's more accurate to say that this is a zine published by a record label, and to be fair, this doesn't strike me as an organ for self-promotion. Of the dozen or so bands interviewed herein, Yage was the only one that caught my attention, but the layout inside was striking enough to draw me in to several other short interviews. From all appearances, a French scene stalwart. (AC)
Walked in Line Records / BP #4 / 60840 Breuil Le Sec / France

YE DRUNKEN SAILOR #2 / $3
8.5 x 11 - copied - 33 pgs
Snazzy layout here, with a color cover and fancy computer graphics. The Freyheyt Collective are the fun drunken anarchists of Toronto, and this is their publication. Lots of info about what's up in Toronto, plus regional and national gossip of run-ins with skinheads. The articles are well written, interesting, and readable. (SD)
Box 116 / 399a College St / Toronto, ON M5T 1S2 / Canada
www.tao.ca/~freyheyt

ZINE LIBRARIAN ZINE / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 36 pgs
This features a list of known zine libraries around the world (hopefully incomplete) and some anecdotes and advice on maintaining a zine library. The articles are kind of dry (although I think zine libraries are a good thing, it's not something I can get *too* excited about), but this should be good for networking. (MD)
PO Box 12409 / Portland, OR 97212

ZINE WORLD: A READERS GUIDE TO THE UNDERGROUND PRESS #17 / $4
8.5 x 11 - copied - 72 pgs
Another chapter in the ever improving story of the zine that reviews zines. The best issue so far satisfies me with enough interesting free speech-related articles to make the many pages of zine reviews interesting. The articles in this issue focus a great deal on the repressive climate in the post-September 11 world and the restrictions on free speech. Horror stories of banned airline passengers and paranoid law enforcement officers fit cozily between believable conspiracy theories and homemade bookbinding instructions. It's a good zine, even if Gordon does reviews for them! (CR)
PO Box 330156 / Murfreesboro, TN 37133-0156



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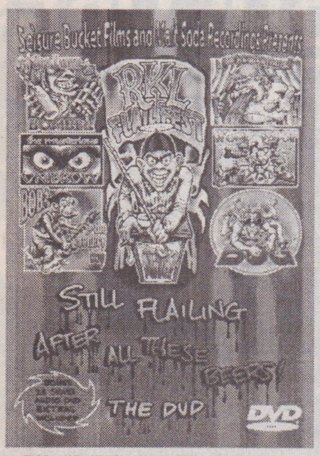

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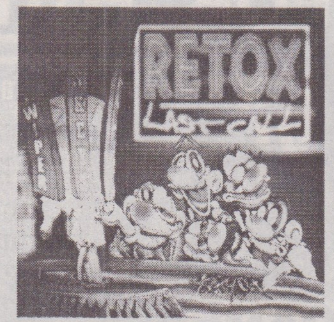

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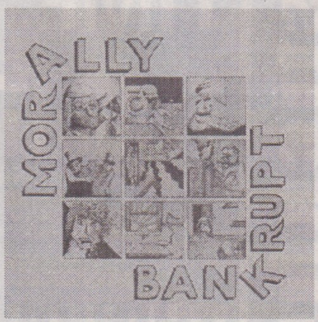

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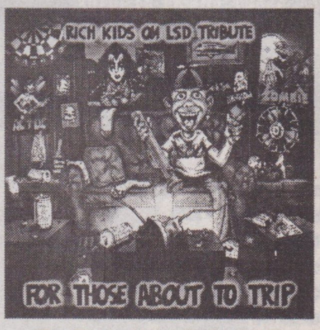

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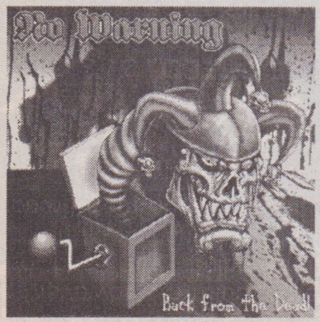

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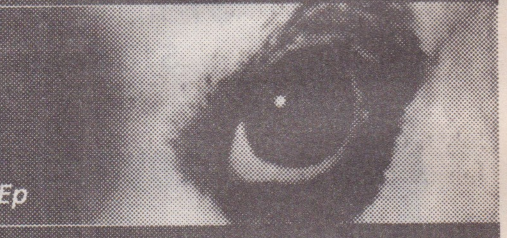

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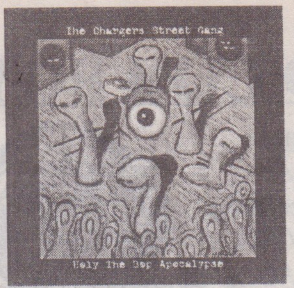

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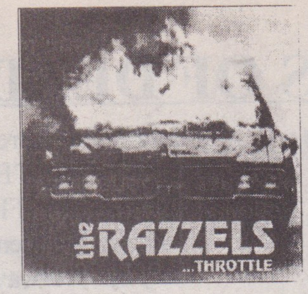

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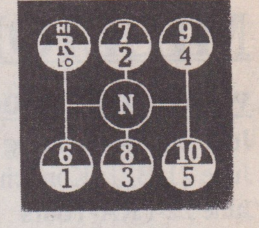

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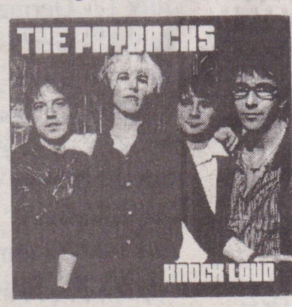

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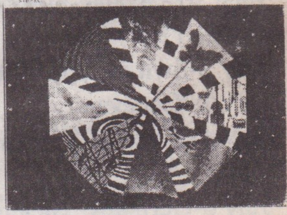

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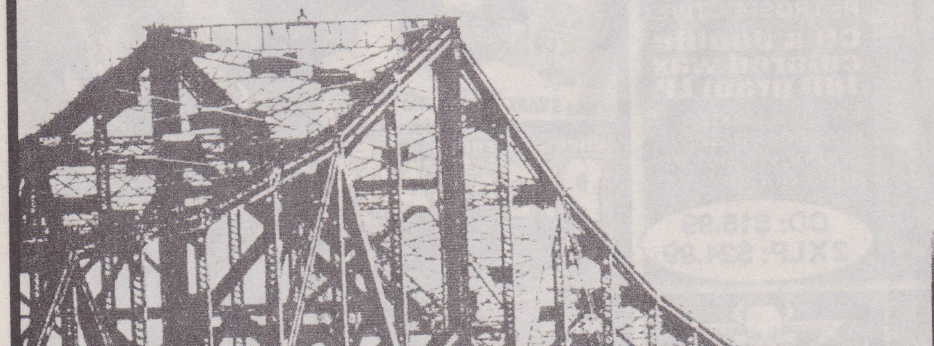

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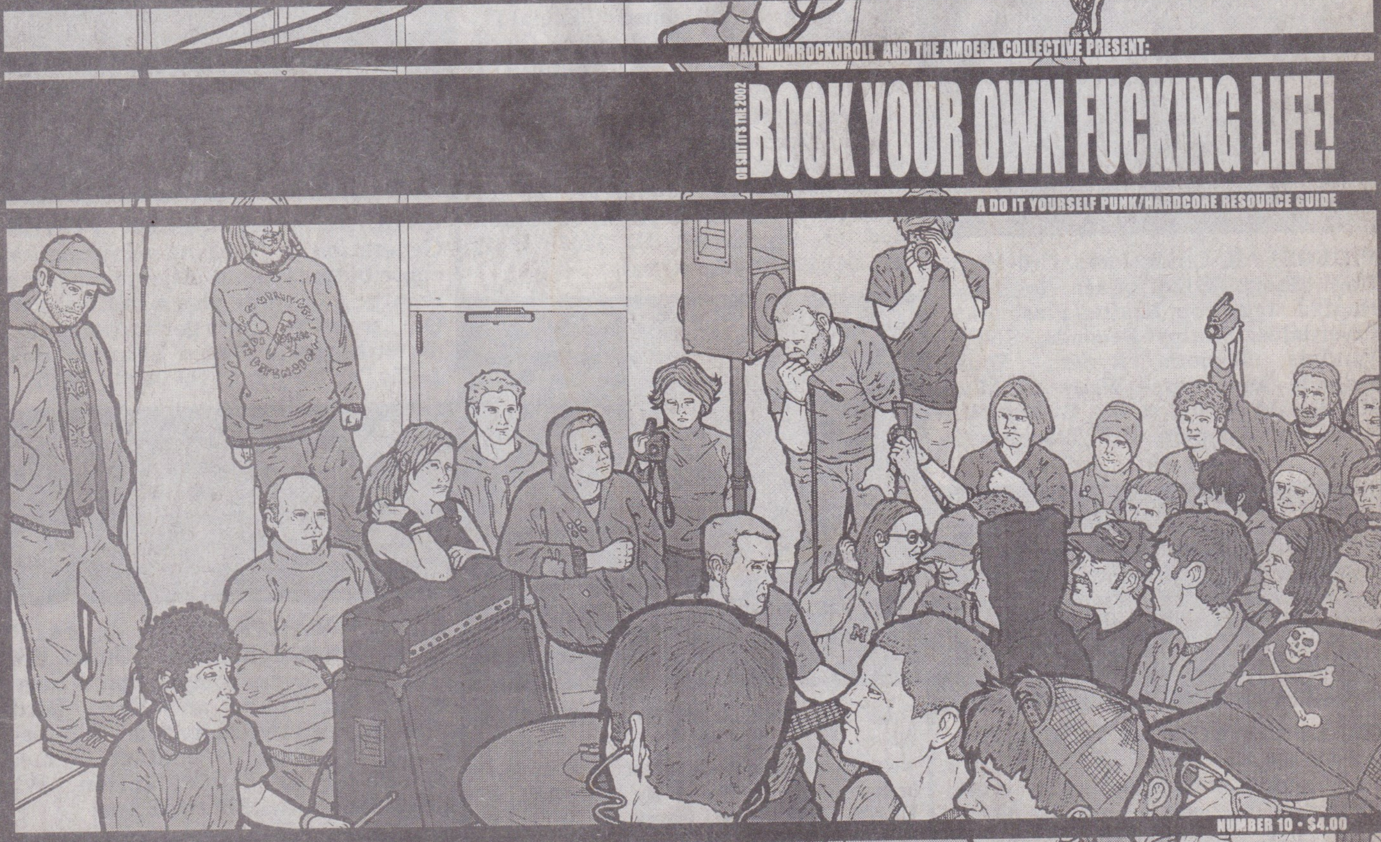

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